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THE NORTH SIDE OF CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

Before the present Archbishop's Palace was built

CANTERBURY

BY W. TEIGNMOUTH SHORE
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E. A. B.

FROM

E. G. O.

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CANTERBURY

FIRST VIEW

As we stand upon the summit of Bell Harry Tower—more happily called the Angel Steeple—of Canterbury Cathedral, looking down upon city and countryside, much of the history of England lies spread beneath our feet: the Britons were at work here before the Romans came marching with their stolid legions; here to Ethelbert, Saxon King of Kent, St Augustine preached the gospel of Christ; in the church below, Becket was murdered and the Black Prince buried; to this city, to the shrine of St Thomas, came innumerable pilgrims, one of them our first great English poet; then the crash of the Reformation swept away shrines and pilgrims, the mirk and romance of mediævalism vanished into the mists of history, and the city to-day lives chiefly in the past. Away to

the east and south are the narrow seas, crossed by conquering Romans and Normans, crossed for centuries by a constant stream of travellers from all ends of the earth, citizens of every clime, to some of whom the sight of the English coast was the first glimpse of home, to others the first view of a strange land; away to the north and west are the Medway and the Thames, Rochester and London. From no other tower, perhaps, can so wide a bird's-eye view of our history be obtained; Canterbury is so situated that ever since England has been and as long as England shall be, this city has been and will be a centre of the nation's life.

At first entrance to it, Canterbury does not impress with its antiquity; there are, indeed, the ancient Cathedral, ancient gates and ancient houses. But as the sights of the city grow familiar, as its atmosphere enters into our souls, as its story becomes known, gradually and surely we realise that most of what we see now is but youthful compared with the great age of the place; and we feel that when all this of the present day has mouldered to dust, as must all man's works, here will be another city, perhaps even fairer than the one we are looking on, and that the men of those days to come will

wonder and speculate as to the likeness of us of to-day. Canterbury is ancient and beautiful; no place for the mere tourist who fancies that in an hour or two of sight-seeing he can learn to know and love her: she is like a beautiful woman, whose charms never stale; like a good woman, ever showing to those who love her some fresh enchantment.

But it is not history—not the story of dead events—that chiefly fascinates us in Canterbury, or, indeed, in any such city; it is the lives of the men who made that history, who took part in those events. Here, as we walk the streets, we think of Augustine, of Thomas, of the Black Prince, of many another; and of many great men of letters—Chaucer, Erasmus, Marlowe, Thackeray, Dickens, Stanley: the first painting for us the Canterbury of his own days, the last that of past times. To understand fully the beauty of such a place, we must allow not only its spirit to enter into us, but we must in our mind's eyes people its ways with those who have walked there aforetime, with the shadows not of the great only but of the humble, who all in their degree helped to the making of history and of this historic city.

It is to the Cathedral that most men, when set down here, first turn their steps; and rightly so. We must not refuse to listen to the voices of its stones, must not look upon them as dull, dead, dumb things; to those who are ready to hear they will always a tale unfold—of beliefs gone beyond recall, of the men whose untiring patience and skill raised for us this splendid monument of the past, of saints and of sinners, of victors and of vanquished. The least advantageous way to attempt the attainment of any true sense of the fascination of Canterbury Cathedral is to enter it straightway, intent on seeing rapidly all that it contains of interest; though every stone in its fabric is of interest, almost every charm that it possesses will be lost to those who thus wrongly approach. Rather walk slowly round, entering the close by Christ Church gateway, completed in 1517, sadly battered by time but unspoiled by the hand of the destroying restorer; without stands the monument to Christopher Marlowe, son of the city. But we pass in to the quiet trees and the trim grass; we look up at Bell Harry Tower, the centre of the Cathedral as the Cathedral is of the city. Walk round, not troubling to seek out the name or the record of this portion of the building or of that;

CHRIST CHURCH GATE

Entrance to the precincts of Canterbury Cathedral

round by Becket's Crown and the ruins of the Infirmary, by the Dark Entry and so out into Green Court.

The face of Nature never grows so familiar to us that we know her every tone and expression; so is it with some of the handiworks of man—with this Cathedral, for instance. Great changes are wrought in its aspect by the seasons of the year, by daylight, by the lights of night, by sunrise and by sunset; changes which every man may see; and slight yet never insignificant changes are touched in upon the picture by every passing cloud that casts a shadow upon the grey towers and walls, by every snowflake that finds a lodgment on its countless graven stones; changes which only the few who love will discern.

In visiting the interior the usual course pursued by visitors is curious and unsatisfactory, leaving but a confused impression upon those who have not read the story of the building, and killing what may be called its humanity. Of course, the traveller who desires to see as much as possible in the shortest possible time must not complain if he sees much and understands little; but those who have sufficient time at their disposal will do well to make several short visits rather than one of

prolonged duration, each visit being devoted to a specific end. The two principal points of interest are the history of the fabric, and the martyrdom or murder of St Thomas à Becket, with its consequences.

THE STORY OF THE CATHEDRAL

To the eye of the expert the buildings of any ancient church or cathedral tell their story with simplicity and directness. Even to the eye of the inexpert in such matters, it is at once apparent that Canterbury is a growth of long ages, the handiwork of many generations of builders. The grey weather-beaten exterior, with its varied architecture, is evidently not the design of any single brain, and the dim, religious aisles and chapels echo with hints of memories of architects and masons into whose various hands came the glory of carrying on the work which their forefathers had begun and left for them to continue or to complete.

It is believed that on this same site there stood once a Roman or British church, which was granted to Augustine by Ethelbert, and by him consecrated and reconsecrated "in the name of the

Saviour, our God and Lord Jesus Christ, and there he established an habitation for himself, and for all his successors"; in short, he founded the monastery of Christ Church. To this church additions were made by Archbishop Odo toward the end of the tenth century, concerning whom is narrated a pretty monkish legend: "The roof of Christ Church had become rotten from excessive age, and rested throughout upon half-shattered pieces: wherefore he set about to reconstruct it, and being also desirous of giving to the walls a more aspiring altitude, he directed his assembled workmen to remove altogether the disjointed structure above, and commanded them to supply the deficient height of the walls by raising them. But because it was absolutely necessary that the Divine Service should not be interrupted, and no temple could be found sufficiently capacious to receive the multitude of the people, the archbishop prayed to Heaven that until the work should be completed, neither rain nor wind might be suffered to intrude within the walls of the church, so as to prevent the performance of the service. And so it came to pass: for during three years in which the walls of the church were being carried upwards, the whole building remained open to the sky; yet did no

rain fall either within the church, or even within the walls of the city, that could impede the clergy standing in the church in the performance of their duty, or restrain the people from coming even to the beginning of it. And truly it was a sight worth seeing, to behold the space beyond the walls of the city drenched with water, while the walls themselves remained perfectly dry."[1]

Of this Saxon building it is not likely that there are any remnants in the present church, though it is barely possible that there are some relics of it in the west wall of the crypt.

When Alphege was archbishop, in the year 1011, the Danes attacked the city, sacked it, slaughtered the citizens, the while the monks sought refuge in the church. The archbishop went forth to utter an appeal to the marauders, who however, turning a deaf ear to his entreaties for mercy, seized and bound him: "Then these children of Satan piled barrels one upon another, and set them on fire, designing thus to burn the roof. Already the heat of the flames began to melt the lead, which

[1] Edmer, who was a boy in the monastic school in the time of Lanfranc, in *The Architectural History of Canterbury Cathedral*, by Professor R. Willis, M.A., F.R.S., a work to which all subsequent writers about Canterbury Cathedral owe a deep debt.

ran down inside." Driven from their sanctuary, the wretched monks went out to their death, only four of them escaping. Alphege was carried away to prison and to torture, and, after seven months, was put to death at Greenwich. Years after, the saint's body was restored to his own church.

Fire without the sword wrought havoc in 1067, when "the devouring flames consumed nearly all that was there preserved most precious, whether in ornaments of gold, of silver, or of other materials, or in sacred and profane books." Three years later when Lanfranc, Abbot of Caen, became archbishop, he found himself without a cathedral, and set to with vigour to restore the monastery and the church. In seven years he had raised a fair, new edifice upon the site of the wrecked building. "But before this work began, he commanded that the bodies of the saints, which were buried in the eastern part of the church, should be removed to the western part, where the oratory of the blessed Virgin Mary stood. Wherefore, after a three days' fast, the bodies of those most precious priests of the Lord, Dunstan and Alphege were raised, and in the presence of an innumerable multitude, conveyed to their destined place of interment, and there decently buried. To which I, Edmer,

THE SOUTH SIDE OF CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

Showing South-West Transept, St Anselm's Tower, and South-East Transept

can bear witness, for I was then a boy at the school."

Under the high altar of the old church the relics of St Wilfrid were found, and eventually buried to the north of the altar in the new building. Here may be quoted another story told us by Edmer: "In our own time, it happened to one of the elder brethren of the church, Alfroin by name, who filled the office of sacrist, that he, on the night of the festival of St Wilfrid, was resting in a certain lofty place in the church, outside the choir, and before an altar, above which, at that time, the relics of the blessed Wilfrid were deposited in a shrine. There, as he lay between sleeping and waking, he saw the church filled with light, and angelic persons performing the service, and beheld those whose duty it was to read or sing, ascend the cochlea or winding-stair, and ask a blessing before the altar and body of the blessed man, which done, they straightway descended, returned, and resumed the usual office of the church with all solemnity."

Are not these stories quaint and simple, these told us by the old monks, with their simple faith? They dreamed dreams in those days and called them heavenly visions. To-day we attribute all

our dreams to earthly causes. Who knows whether they or we are the wiser?

Of Lanfranc's work there are most likely no further remains than some portions of the walls of the nave, of the Martyrdom and of the splendid crypt.

Under Anselm, Prior Ernulf continued Lanfranc's work, by pulling down the eastern part and rebuilding it with far greater splendour. So magnificent was it that "nothing like it could be seen in England, either for the brilliancy of its glass windows, the beauty of its marble pavement, or the many coloured pictures which led the wandering eyes to the very summit of the ceiling."

Ernulf was succeeded by Conrad, who completed the chancel, "the glorious choir of Conrad." In 1130 the beautiful church was dedicated by Archbishop William. Never since the days of the dedication of the Temple of Solomon, so the story runs, had so famous a dedication been heard of in all the world.

Yet again did fire conquer and destroy; and once again it will be best to quote from the monkish chronicler, this time from Gervase, who was witness of the destruction.[1]

[1] Willis, as quoted *supra*.

"In the year of grace one thousand one hundred and seventy-four, by the just but occult judgment of God, the church of Christ at Canterbury was consumed by fire. . . . Now the manner of the burning . . . . was as follows. In the aforesaid year, on the nones of September, at almost the ninth hour, and during an extraordinarily violent south wind, a fire broke out before the gate of the church, and outside the walls of the monastery. . . . From thence, while the citizens were assembling and subduing the fire, cinders and sparks carried aloft by the high wind were deposited upon the church, and being driven by the fury of the wind between the joints of the lead, remained there amongst the half-rotten planks, and shortly glowing with increasing heat, set fire to the rotten rafters; from thence the fire was communicated to the larger beams and their braces, no one yet perceiving or helping. For the well-painted ceiling below, and the sheet-lead covering above, concealed between them the fire that had arisen within. . . . But the beams and braces burning, the flames rose to the slopes of the roof; and the sheets of lead yielded to the increasing heat and began to melt. Thus the raging wind, finding a freer entrance, increased the fury of the fire; and the flames

beginning to show themselves, a cry arose in the churchyard: 'See! see! the church is on fire.'

"Then the people and the monks assemble in haste; they draw water, they brandish their hatchets, they run up the stairs full of eagerness to save the church, already, alas! beyond their help. But when they reach the roof and perceive the black smoke and scorching flames that pervade it throughout, they abandon the attempt in despair, and, thinking only of their own safety, make all haste to descend.

"And now that the fire had loosened the beams from the pegs that bound them together, the half-burnt timbers fell into the choir below upon the seats of the monks; the seats, consisting of a great mass of wood-work, caught fire, and thus the mischief grew worse and worse. And it was marvellous, though sad, to behold how that glorious choir itself fed and assisted the fire that was destroying it. For the flames multiplied by this mass of timber, and extending upwards full fifteen cubits, scorched and burnt the walls, and more especially injured the columns of the church.

"And now the people ran to the ornaments of the church, and began to tear down the pallia and the curtains, some that they might save, but some

to steal them. The reliquary chests were thrown down from the high beam and thus broken, and the contents scattered; but the monks collected them and carefully preserved them from the fire. Some there were, who, inflamed with a wicked and diabolical cupidity, feared not to appropriate to themselves the things of the church, which they had saved from the fire.

"In this manner the house of God, hitherto delightful as a paradise of pleasures, was now made a despicable heap of ashes, reduced to a dreary wilderness, and laid open to all the injuries of the weather.

"The people were astonished that the Almighty should suffer such things, and maddened with excess of grief and perplexity, they tore their hair and beat the walls and pavement of the church with their heads and hands, blaspheming the Lord and His saints, the patrons of the church; and many, both of laity and monks, would rather have laid down their lives than that the church should have so miserably perished."

It was worth quoting this account almost in full both for its vividness and vigour, and for the incidental details given of the structure; but the account of the rebuilding must be summarised,

full as it is of picturesque and graphic touches. For some time nothing was accomplished in the way of restoration; the roof of the choir was, of course, entirely gone, and all the columns were in a dangerous condition. A French architect, William of Sens, was called in to advise. He was an active, handy man, skilful and resourceful, and the carrying out of the work was entrusted to him. The ruins were cleared away, stone procured from beyond the Channel, sculptors and masons assembled, and a commencement made in September 1174. For over four years William of Sens worked diligently, when by a terrible fall he was "rendered helpless alike to himself and for the work, but no other person than himself was in the least injured. Against the master only was the vengeance of God or spite of the devil directed." How closely in touch with God—or the devil—were those men of old.

William the first, rendered helpless by his injuries, after a brave struggle returned to France, and was succeeded by William the second: "English by nation, small in body, but in workmanship of many kinds acute and honest." It was not until 1184 that the new choir and some of the adjacent buildings were completed, and it

is these that we view to-day. But some five years after the disastrous fire, the eager monks urged on the builders, being filled with a longing to celebrate Easter in the new choir. William the second worked manfully toward this end. On Easter Eve fire was lit and consecrated in the cloister, then carried in solemnity, with the singing of hymns and burning of incense, into the church, and the Paschal candle lit therewith.

The next great undertaking was the destruction of Lanfranc's nave in 1378. The Norman's work seems to have fallen into desperate disrepair. Archbishop Sudbury appealing for public help, "issued a mandate addressed to all ecclesiastical persons in his diocese enjoining them to solicit subscriptions for rebuilding the nave of the church, 'propter ipsius notoriam et evidentem ruinam,'" and promising forty days' indulgence to all who subscribed. Nowadays we should hold a bazaar. The works were not completed until 1411, under Archbishop Arundel, who contributed a thousand marks and the five bells known as the Arundell ryng. But it was not the archbishops in person but Prior Chillenden who actually carried out the rebuilding, becoming Prior in 1390 and dying in the same year that his task was completed. Practically nothing

of Lanfranc's nave remains; it was pulled down wholesale, and the existing nave, transepts, and portions of Bell Harry raised.

With the building of the towers it is better to deal when we come to walk round the exterior of the church.

So it will be seen, and more clearly understood as we wander round the interior, that Canterbury Cathedral sets before us the history of English ecclesiastical architecture. From Norman down to late Decorated, all styles are exemplified here, often most beautifully. From these historic stones echo back not only the voices of the great dead—warriors, kings and priests—but the noise of chisel and hammer and axe wielded by pious hands of those who in their humble sphere lived to the glory of God and of His Church.

The Interior

The best way to obtain a fair view of the beautiful proportions of the nave and of the most striking picture of the interior of the church, is to enter by the south-west door or porch. Here in Saxon days courts of law were held, cases being tried which could not be referred to other courts. Prior Chillenden about 1400 built the

THE CHAPEL OF "OUR LADY" IN THE UNDERCROFT,
CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

present fine porch; he was a man of energy, and to him and to those whom he inspired to do his biddings Canterbury owes a great debt. Erasmus has described for us the figures that used to occupy the panel above the entrance, the effigies of Becket's murderers, who, he says, go down to the ages with much the same ill-name as that which pertains to Pilate, Judas and Caiaphas. Some vague fragments of the carving still survive, including an altar, probably that of the Martyrdom. In the vaulting of the porch are various coats-of-arms, among them those of the Sees of Canterbury and Chichester, and of the kingdoms of England and of France. In accordance with an idea suggested by Dean Alford, some of the niches here and on the west front have been filled in recent days with statues of men of note who in one way or another have been connected with the history of the Cathedral.

They are solemn stones, or rather it is solemn ground this, over which we pass, "where the saints have trod"—saints, soldiers, ecclesiastics, Christians all in their several degrees, from dim Saxon days down to this present moment.

Now, we enter the nave.

Somewhat cold, somewhat unearthly almost, is

the impression made by the forest of pillars rising through the clerestory to the vaulted roof; stretching away to the central tower—Bell Harry—where light shines down into the gloom. A beautiful place wherein to rest and dream dreams of the past. All now is grey, but in bygone ages the great church blazed with colours; paintings and rich hangings adorned the walls; there were numberless altars with their tiny points of light, and all was enriched and at the same time mellowed by the splendour shed upon pavement and pillar from the "storied windows richly dight." Who shall say whether the change from pomp to simplicity be for better or for worse? As with so many other matters in this opinionative world, it all depends upon the point of view; doubtless to the stern ascetic the rule that now obtains is for the best; upon the superstitious pilgrim of old the glories of the past assuredly had their influence. Yet, why think of what has gone, when that which remains is so worthy?

The nave dates from about 1378 to 1411, in which last year the builder of it, the aforementioned Prior Chillenden, died, "who after nobly ruling as Prior of this church for twenty years twenty-five weeks and five days," says his

epitaph, as given by Willis, "at length on the day of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary closed his last day." As it was written of Christopher Wren, so here it might be of Chillenden—"If monument be asked for, look around." The architecture here is Perpendicular, contrasting exquisitely with the early work of the choir; it is no new simile—but there is no call to provide a new when the old is so good—to say that these splendid pillars, rising from their firm, fixed roots in the stony floor and springing up into the grey heights far above, strike deep upon the imagination as being akin to the glorious pillars of a stately forest.

A curious and oft-repeated error is to say that Canterbury is unique among churches, in that from the nave we look *up* to the choir, the latter being raised on the crypt. A precisely similar cause and effect are to be found, for example, at Worcester.

The stained glass which once adorned the nave, is gone, smashed by zealous Puritans, and all of olden colour that we now see is in the great west window, compiled of fragments from those that have departed.

Of the tombs and monuments in the nave the most noteworthy are in the north aisle—those of

Charles the First's famous organist, Orlando Gibbons; of Sir John Boys, founder of the hospital for the poor near the North Gate of the city; and the altar tomb of Archbishop Sumner. Also to be noted, a window to the memory of Dean Stanley, sometime canon of the Cathedral and writer of that famous work, *Historical Memorials of Canterbury.*

As we stand in the choir of to-day, we would indeed be of dull imagination did we not see and drink in the poetic beauty of such a growth as this, beautiful in its association with the centuries, with countless thousands of worshippers; beautiful intrinsically and as a record of faithful labour, of splendid artistry, of devout perseverance. There are other cathedral choirs more perfect as specimens of one or other style of architecture, but not one more hallowed by sacred and stirring memories. Here stands Norman and Early English work side by side, melting, as historically they did, from one into the other; the work of French and English hands and brains. Here the mind is forcibly carried back to the far, dim ages, when on this very ground the rude Saxons worshipped—this ground which Augustine found already dedicated to the worship of Christ, upon which he reared his new temple,

IN THE NAVE AFTER EVENSONG, CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

where ever since has sounded the chanting of the monks and of sweet-voiced choirs.

One unusual structural feature at once strikes even the usually unobservant; the trend inward of the walls as they reach toward the east, accounted for by the builders having to accommodate themselves to the two towers of St Anselm and St Andrew, left undestroyed by the great fire which called for the rebuilding of the choir. It is not possible to say with any degree of surety at what point the work of French William ended and was succeeded by that of English William; and, indeed, it is most probable that the latter worked from and completed the designs of the former. Striking, however, is the exquisite contrast in the combination of the French stone from Caen and the English Purbeck marble. Glorious as was the choir of Conrad, this that succeeded to it is far more beautiful and, of course, more ornate. The mouldings are very varied—billet-work, dog-tooth, zigzag and so forth, Norman intermixed with the succeeding style. Gervase states that "The old capitals were plain, the new are most artistically sculptured. The old arches and everything else either plain, or sculptured with an axe and not with a chisel; but in the new work first-rate sculpture

abounded everywhere. In the old work no marble shafts, in the new innumerable ones." But excellent work in stone can be executed with the axe in skilful, practised hands—easy tools do not necessarily mean fine output; and Willis points out the interesting fact that down to his day at any rate French masons used the axe "with great dexterity in carving."

A noteworthy feature of the triforium is the curious conjuncture of an outer round-headed arch enclosing two that are pointed, again a mingling of the Norman and Early English styles. To quote Willis yet again, this "may have arisen either from the indifference of the artist as to the mixture of forms, or else from deliberate contrivance; for as he was compelled, from the nature of his work, to retain round-headed arcades, windows, and arches in the side-aisles, and yet was accustomed to and desirous of employing pointed arches in his new building, he might discreetly mix some round-headed arches with them, in order to make the contrast less offensive by causing the mixture of forms to pervade the whole composition, as if an intentional principle." Commentators are very fond of reading into the works of dead and gone writers, in particular into the plays and poems of

Shakespeare, thoughts and speculations and intentions entirely alien to past ages. Is it not more than likely that architectural critics fall not seldom into the same blunder? Probably the sheer truth concerning these old builders is that they builded better than they knew, and that we with the light of later and present days attribute to design what was the result of inadvertence. But why analyse and speculate? Let us be thankful for what we have received; if it be justifiable to say grace before books, how much more so to return thanks for these pictures drawn in stone.

Around the choir stands the screen of Prior Henry de Estria, dating from about 1305, at least partly his handiwork; and noteworthy is the Norman doorway.

The altar stands high, situated as it is above the later and loftier portion of the crypt. Rich indeed it must have been in pre-Reformation days, glowing with its costly and precious vessels; in a grated vault beneath it, the treasury of gold and silver, which would have made Crœsus and Midas feel poor, so says Erasmus. Most of this splendour was swept up by the greedy hands of Henry VIII., the "professional widower" and equally professional thief, and what of beauty this sinner

left undespoiled was destroyed by Puritan saints. The present altar is rich, but not religiously impressive.

The vast difference between the Christianity of mediæval times and of the days that followed the Reformation cannot be more forcibly emphasised than by recalling that this choir, now the centre of a simple ritual, was then one of the most famous homes of relic worship. To the new choir when ready to receive them were restored—they had stood in its predecessor—the remains of St Dunstan and of St Alphege, "the co-exiles of the monks." Says Gervase: "Prior Alan, taking with him nine of the brethren of the Church in whom he could trust, went by night to the tombs of the saints, so that he might not be incommoded by a crowd, and having locked the doors of the church, he commanded the stone-work that enclosed them to be taken down. The monks and servants of the Church, in obedience to the Prior's commands, took the structure to pieces, opened the stone coffins of the saints, and bore their relics to the *vestiarium*. Then, having removed the cloths in which they had been wrapped, and which were half-consumed from age and rottenness, they covered them with other and more handsome palls,

and bound them with linen bands. They bore the saints, thus prepared, to their altars, and deposited them in wooden chests, covered within and without with lead; which chests, thus lead-covered, and strongly bound with iron, were enclosed in stone-work that was consolidated with melted lead." There is eloquent evidence of the morality of the times in that "in whom he could trust"; thefts of relics were common enough, and monks earned high recompense for showing themselves successful "cracksmen."

Indeed, the bones of the saints were often the cause of bad blood between communities of Christians, who preached to others peace and good-will among men. These very relics of St Dunstan are a case very much to the point. The monks of Glastonbury denied that Canterbury possessed them at all, saying that they had been conveyed thence to Glastonbury when the Danes had sacked the metropolitan church. In 1508 Archbishop Warham, little foreseeing the near approach of these days when saints' relics would not any longer be a valuable property, answered this claim by opening the shrine, wherein lay fragments of a human body, and on the heart a leaden plate bearing the words SANCTUS DUNSTANUS. The

Abbot of Glastonbury, however, refused to be convinced or to be comforted, at last pitiably confessing that "the people had believed in the genuineness of their saint for so long" that he was afraid to speak the truth to them! When the tomb was laid open, the skull of the saint was removed from it, set in a silver reliquary, and added to the other relics that were displayed to wondering though not always credulous pilgrims. Among these other relics may be named the right arm of Jesus Christ, some of the clay from which Adam was created and portions of Aaron's rod. Wonderful are the abuses of credulity.

Of the shrine or altar of St Dunstan, destroyed at the Reformation, on the south of the great altar, some Decorated diaper work is all the remnant; of that of St Alphege, which probably stood opposite, there remains not a trace.

There are many tombs here which may well give us pause, for in them lie buried many of the great ecclesiastical rulers of days gone by. Hard by where stood the altar of St Dunstan, sleeps Simon of Sudbury, archbishop from 1375 to 1381. He was one of those enlightened few who protested against the evil resulting from the promiscuous concourse of pilgrims that resorted to the shrine of St Thomas.

Let Dean Stanley tell us the story: "In the year of the fourth jubilee, 1370, the pilgrims were crowding as usual along the great London road to Canterbury, when they were overtaken by Simon of Sudbury, at that time Bishop of London, but afterwards Primate, and well known for his munificent donations to the walls and towers of the town of Canterbury. He was a bold and vigorous prelate; his spirit was stirred within him at the sight of what he deemed a mischievous superstition, and he openly told them that the plenary indulgence which they hoped to gain by their visit to the holy city would be of no avail to them. Such a doctrine from such an authority fell like a thunderbolt in the midst of the vast multitude. Many were struck dumb; others lifted up their voices and cursed him to his face, with the characteristic prayer that he might meet with a shameful death. One especially, a Kentish gentleman—by name, Thomas of Aldon—rode straight up to him, in towering indignation, and said, 'My Lord Bishop, for this act of yours, stirring the people to sedition against St Thomas, I stake the salvation of my soul that you will close your life by a most terrible death'; to which the vast concourse answered, 'Amen, Amen.' The curse, it

13991

was believed, prevailed. The *vox populi*, so the chronicler expressly asserts, turned out to be the *vox Dei*. 'From the beginning of the world it never has been heard that any one ever injured the Cathedral of Canterbury, and was not punished by the Lord.' Eleven years from that time, the populace of London not unnaturally imagined that the rights of St Thomas were avenged, when they saw the unfortunate Primate dragged out of the Tower, and beheaded by the Kentish rebels under Wat Tyler. His head was taken to his native place, Sudbury, where it is still preserved. His body was buried in the tomb, still to be seen on the south side of the choir of the Cathedral, where not many years ago, when it was accidentally opened, the body was seen within, wrapped in cerecloth, the vacant space of the head occupied by a leaden ball."

Archbishop Stratford (1333–48) lies to the west of the above, a monument sadly defaced. It was he who rendered weighty service to Edward III., when the monarch looked upon him with unfavourable eye, considering that it was his advice that had caused his, the King's, troubles. The archbishop fled from London, seeking refuge at Canterbury. He preached a pathetic sermon to

the multitudinous congregation that had flocked into the Cathedral, concluding by excommunicating the King's evil advisers. When the last words were spoken, the torches that struggled with the gloom were put out; the bell was tolled; the people scattered in confusion. So great was the power and awe of holy church in those days that this proceeding of the archbishop's proved powerfully effective and the King's hand was stayed.

Then there is the tomb of Cardinal Kemp, archbishop from 1452–54, with a curious wooden canopy. He was at Agincourt with Henry V.

On the north side, noticeable is the monument to Archbishop Chichele, founder of the colleges of St John and of All Souls, Oxford, by the fellows of which latter college his tomb is kept in repair. The effigy of the living man is gruesomely put in conjunction with a grisly skeleton in a winding sheet; to the mediæval mind death was almost disgustingly horrible. It was he who aided and abetted Henry V. in his preposterous claim upon the throne of France, which prosaic plea has been turned into poetry by Shakespeare in Scene 2 Act I. of *The Life of King Henry the Fifth.*

Then of much more recent date, William Howley (1828–48), who so bitterly opposed the Roman

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Catholic Relief Bill and the Reform Bill, which brought him disfavour with the good citizens of Canterbury. He crowned Queen Victoria, and performed the marriage ceremony of the Prince Consort.

Archbishop Bourchier (1454–86) also lies here; who was visited by the Maronite Patriarch of Antioch, Peter II., with his camels and his dromedaries, and who left to the church "one image of the Holy Trinity of pure gold, with the diadem, and xj balassers, x saphires, and xliiij gems called perlys."

Then proceeding toward the east we enter the Trinity Chapel, standing upon the same site as the old chapel of the same name.

But it is not our purpose here to write in detail the story of Canterbury Cathedral; it can be found elsewhere by those who desire it; all our aim is to tell sufficient of it and in such manner as to make the building a living thing, not the dead mass to which it is too often reduced by guides and guide-books.

To the skill and genius of English William we owe the Trinity Chapel, where stood the shrine of St Thomas of Canterbury, now but a memory, where still stands the tomb of Edward the Black

EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE'S TOMB
IN TRINITY CHAPEL, CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

Prince, who, in his will, laid it down that he should be buried in the crypt, but here in the brighter light he lies. A splendid figure of romance he was—a great fighter, and, as such, beloved of his race; the boy victor of Cressy; the conqueror at Poitiers, where the French King became his captive; in his life the glory of his country, by his untimely death leaving it to anarchy and civil war. A great figure of a man, a name resonant in history, yet on the whole one of the least effective of our princes in that his work lasted not. We stand by his tomb, looking upon his effigy which is life-like in its strength. "There he lies: no other memorial of him exists in the world so authentic. There he lies, as he had directed, in full armour, his head resting on his helmet, his feet with the likeness of 'the spurs he won' at Cressy, his hands joined as in that last prayer which he had offered up on his death-bed." That prayer which he uttered when the evil spirit, the lust of revenge, departed from him: "I give Thee thanks, O God, for all Thy benefits, and with all the pains of my soul I humbly beseech Thy mercy to give me remission of those sins I have wickedly committed against Thee; and of all mortal men whom, willingly or ignorantly, I have offended,

with all my heart I desire forgiveness." He died on Trinity Sunday in the forty-sixth year of his age. Above the canopy hang his gauntlets, his helm, his velvet coat that once blazed with the arms of England and of France, and the empty scabbard of his sword. We stand by this tomb, and all the horror, brutalities, cruelties of those cruel days are forgotten, and the air resounds with echoes of the trumpets of chivalry.

Close by lie Henry IV. and his second queen, Joan of Navarre; in 1832 the tomb was opened, and the body of the King found in strangely perfect preservation: "the nose elevated; the beard thick and matted, and of a deep russet colour; and the jaws perfect, with all the teeth in them except one fore-tooth." Hard by is the small chapel founded by the King, "a chauntre perpetuall with twey prestis for to sing and prey for my soul"; but their voices are hushed.

Here also are the monuments of Odo Coligny, brother of the famous admiral, and of Archbishop Courtenay (1381–96); he gave munificently to the building and its adornment; he was the judge before whom Wiclif was arraigned, and found no pity in his heart for the reformer's disciples.

Fortune has spared for us three of the interest-

ing thirteenth-century windows in this chapel, and they well repay study. The rest were smashed amid the ruinous havoc decreed by Henry VIII., which is described elsewhere. The pictures are of scenes connected with the miracles wrought by the dead saint, with representations of his first tomb in the crypt below and of his later shrine in this very chapel.

Becket's Crown forms the easternmost portion of the Cathedral. The old-time explanation that this chapel was so named as having contained once a part shorn off from the saint's skull by the sword of one of his murderers, can scarcely be correct. On the north stands the tomb of Cardinal Archbishop Pole (1556–58), who died but two-and-twenty hours after his cousin and patron, Queen Mary ; and, in the centre, the chair of St Augustine, carved out of three pieces of Purbeck marble. By some it has been called the chair of St Ethelbert, saying that himself used it as a throne, and, after his conversion, gave it to the greater saint. Others, more cautious, hold that it dates only from the Translation of St Thomas in 1220. Indeed, it is a question of "may-be" and "may-not-be," such an one as delights the hearts of militant archæologists.

St Andrew's and St Anselm's towers, both Prior

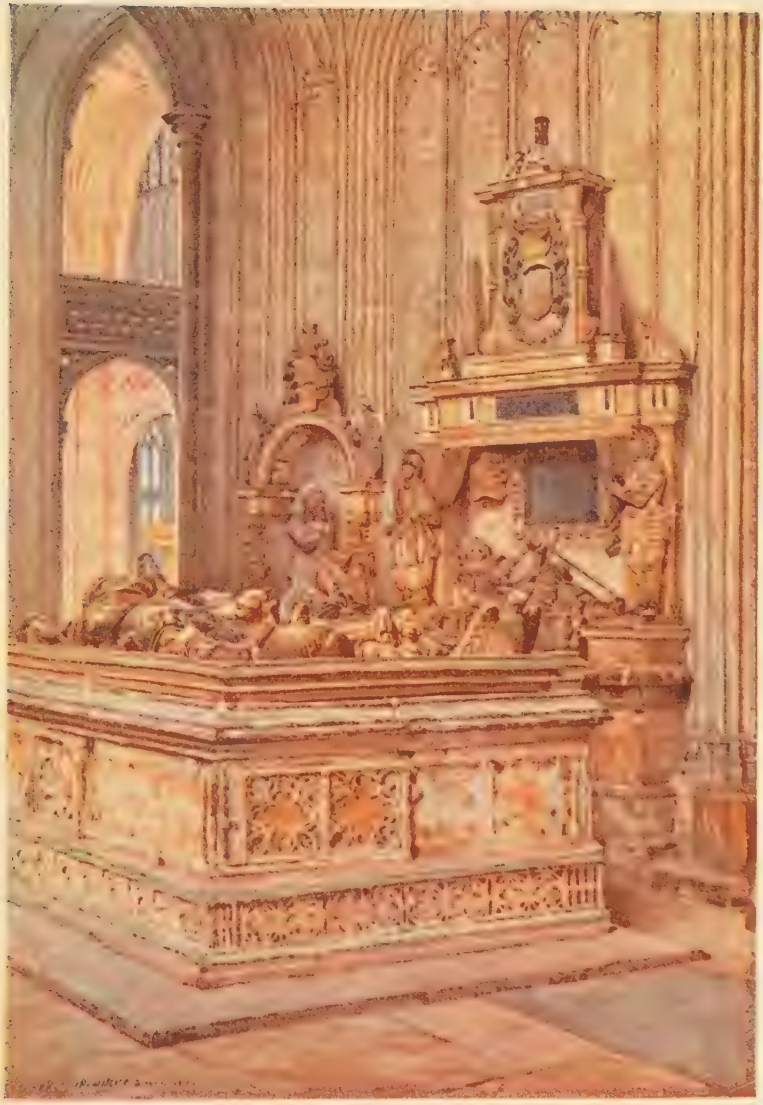
Ernulf's work, stand opposite each other on the north and south sides of the Trinity Chapel, and are sturdy survivors of the great fire that destroyed Conrad's choir. Dividing St Anselm's tower from the aisle is the beautiful altar tomb of Archbishop Simon de Mepham (1328–33), with ornate canopy, who, so it is said, died of a broken heart, the Pope siding with Grandison, Bishop of Exeter, in his quarrel with the archbishop. At the east end of this chapel stood the altar of St Peter and St Paul, behind which St Anselm was buried. Of the saintly figures connected with the Cathedral, that of Anselm is one of the most fascinating; a personality purely mediæval in its saintly piety and its sturdy, unbreakable upholding of the rights of mother church against the encroachments of the temporal powers. After a life of turmoil and trial, he died here in Canterbury, and sleeps in this chapel that bears his name. Above is the watching chamber, where nightly and night-long a monk stood keeping watch and ward over the treasures of the shrine of St Thomas. At least this is one account of the uses made of this chamber—but there are others. But with whatever object it may have been, there can be small doubt that for one purpose or another a watcher

was stationed there at night; solemn his task and his vigil, yet not without its moments of beauty, as all know who have wandered in a vast cathedral, when the moon pours its dim, misty light through the great windows.

Journeying westward we come to the south choir transept, in the two apses of which there used to stand altars to St Gregory and St John, and here the admirable work of the piscinas and credence tables is well worthy of examination. Here, under the south window, which is a memorial to Dean Alford, lies Archbishop Winchelsea (1294–1313), who was regarded by the poor as a saint on account of his profuse almsgiving. On the north side of the building is the companion transept, where the altars in the two apses were dedicated to St Martin and St Stephen. The white marble altar tomb of Archbishop Tait (1861–82) stands here, erected in 1885, the effigy being the work of Sir Edgar Boehm. While Tait was archbishop the Cathedral was yet again attacked by fire, on September 3, 1872. Bell Harry rang out the alarm; clouds of heavy smoke circled up from the roof of the Trinity Chapel, obscuring the beautiful outlines of the Angel Tower. An hour and a half elapsed before a

THE WARRIORS' CHAPEL, CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

Looking West



the choir into the transept of the Martyrdom. There remains here little, if anything, that was seen by Becket's eyes. Here lie buried Archbishop Peckham (1279–92), an interesting monument, and Archbishop Warham (1503–32). The latter was notable—among other things—for his lavish hospitality, and for spending an immense sum upon his palace at Otford, money which he would have lavished upon Canterbury had not the citizens indiscreetly quarrelled with him. He was the friend of Colet and Erasmus, of whose visit here we shall have something to say later on. To the east of this transept is the Lady Chapel, built by Prior Goldstone, the fan-vaulting of which is rich and beautiful.

We may now descend into the crypt, so ending our brief survey of the interior of the Cathedral. This crypt, which we owe to Prior Ernulf, subsequently Bishop of Rochester, is most impressive in its massiveness, its Norman sturdiness, the square bases of the round pillars, the ponderous capitals; the roof, which seems as though too heavy even for such strong supports; the narrow, round-headed windows. The carving, executed after the capitals were put in place, is worthy of note—rough and ready, but thoroughly characteristic. In that portion of the

crypt beneath the south transept a French service is still celebrated, an institution which dates from about 1575, when many Protestants sought refuge in Canterbury. They were weavers for the most part, but neither in their works nor their speech do they now survive, though many families of French lineage and name live here still. In the centre of the crypt was the altar and chapel of the Virgin, once glorious with riches, now a dismal desolation, unfrequented, a shadow of a cult no longer here followed. Close by lies buried Cardinal Morton of the famous "fork," and in the beautiful screen is the tomb of Lady Mohun of Dunster. There is something creepy, uncanny, about these tombs lying dark beneath the mass of building above, something fateful as compared with a grave in some quiet village churchyard. Then there is the chapel of St Gabriel, with the tomb of the Countess of Athol of Chilham Castle (1292), defaced of its splendours. Ernulf's work ends where the crypt suddenly assumes loftier proportions in the easternmost part built by William the Englishman; here Becket was first buried, here he slept until his remains were translated to the gorgeous shrine in the church above. Here, too, have been found bones, including a skull with

marks of violence, which may be, which may not be, the martyr's. Not only is this eastern portion of the crypt loftier, but also lighter in its architectural features: the Norman style has vanished, we have here very early Early English, pointed arches, circular capitals, the beginning of "sweetness and light."

The Exterior

There is a passage in *The Stones of Venice* that should be in everyone's mind when walking in any cathedral close: "Let us go together up the more retired street, at the end of which we can see the pinnacles of one of the towers, and then through the low grey gateway, with its battlemented top and small latticed window in the centre, into the inner private-looking road or close, where nothing goes in but the carts of the tradesmen who supply the bishop and the chapter, and where there are little shaven grass-plots, fenced in by neat rails, before old-fashioned groups of somewhat diminutive and excessively trim houses, with little oriel and bay windows jutting out here and there, and deep wooden cornices and eaves painted cream colour and white, and small porches to their doors in the shape of cockle-shells, or little, crooked, thick,

indescribable wooden gables warped a little on one side; and so forward till we come to larger houses, also old-fashioned, but of red brick, and with gardens behind them, and fruit walls, which show here and there among the nectarines, the vestiges of an old cloister arch or shaft, and looking in front on the Cathedral square itself, laid out in rigid divisions of smooth grass and gravel walk, yet not uncheerful, especially on the sunny side where the canons' children are walking with their nurserymaids." Is not the atmosphere exactly caught and held? Then, as did Ruskin, look on the Cathedral itself. Up high soars the beautiful central tower, now known as Bell Harry, but once and better called the Angel Steeple. Of this perfect building the beginning was in 1433, under Prior Molash, and after delays and intermissions it was brought to completeness by Prior Goldstone, of whose handiwork it has been written: "He vaulted it with a most beautiful vault, and with excellent and artistic workmanship, in every part sculptured and gilt, with ample windows glazed and ironed. He also with great care and industry annexed to the columns which support the same tower two arches or vaults of stone-work, curiously carved, and four smaller ones to assist in sustaining

THE WEST TOWERS AND SOUTH-WEST ENTRANCE,
CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

the said tower"—a remarkable feature of the interior. The west front of the Cathedral is flanked by two towers: the south-west known as the Chichele or Oxford tower, basely imitated by the north-west tower—the Arundel—which dates from 1834, when Lanfranc's work was destroyed.

In the close we must try to forget the present day. When we go to Canterbury to see the Cathedral, when that is practically all in all to us, we must endeavour to call back the past, to put back the "horologe of time," to remember that this fine pile was once the busy centre of a great monastic community, of whose buildings there are many interesting remnants, stone records crumbling away. St Augustine, who founded this powerful monastery, was a Benedictine. The rules were severe, enjoining silence, work, and divine worship. The monastery flourished, and when Lanfranc was appointed archbishop by the Conqueror, its fortunes received a great impetus from the ambitious prelate. It was not only the church that showed the marks of his strong hand but the monastic buildings also, which he surrounded with a great wall. He added to the riches of the community and to the number of the monks, whom he endeavoured to bring back to strict obedience to

their rule; he encouraged learning and literary work; he placed the governance of the monastery in the hands of a prior instead of the archbishop, as heretofore. The monastery, as the years went by, grew more powerful, more rich, more proud, achieving much work of splendid usefulness, some of no use at all. And then came Henry VIII. The buildings inside the monastery walls were numerous—the church, the chapter-house, the cloisters; the dormitories, the buttery, the kitchen, the dining-hall, the infirmary, store-houses and bakeries, stables, houses of entertainment for guests of high and low degree—a beehive of industrious monks. What remains of it all? But little; the memory of a greatness gone for ever—a few buildings, some ruins. These are the picturesque ruins of the infirmary adjoining the east end of the Cathedral, portions of its hall and of the chapel attached to its east end, so that the sick might not be deprived of the solace of the service of God. There is a lovely view of the Cathedral through the fine archway that still stands. Passing westward we come to the Dark Entry, which, turning to the right, takes us to Green Court: it is a dark, gruesome passage, meet for the habitation of the ghost whose history has been sung by Ingoldsby; but it is

RUINS OF THE INFIRMARY, CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.

beautiful also. Close by is the Baptistry, as the Lavatory Tower is now miscalled, which nestles snugly against the Cathedral, whence was distributed the supply of water to the various buildings. Green Court is worthy a visit for its own picturesque sake, but above all because it contains one of the most delightful specimens of Norman architecture, the magnificent staircase leading up to the King's School; there are those who say that the Normans built splendidly, but not beautifully, to whom this one work is sufficient answer. Of the chapter-house, what can we say save that the hand of the restorer has been laid heavily upon it?—translator-traitor we have been told; we may say with almost equal truth, restorer-destroyer. And then we may go into the cloisters, which next after the church was the centre of monastic life. The present cloister is chiefly the work of Prior Chillenden, but traces of many periods are to be found—Norman, Early English and Perpendicular. Do not hurry here; it is a place in which to loiter, examining its many beauties, watching the Cathedral the while; as the white clouds sail behind the great tower, or as the storm darkens the day. The lightning flashes, the thunder rolls and mutters, and as the mirk grows deeper and

deeper, as though night were upon us—what do we hear? The echoes from long ago of the cries of terror-stricken men, the imperious tones of a haughty priest, the shouts and clamour of armed men. We have travelled back to the dark night of December 29, in the year 1170, the night of Becket's murder. There have been penned many accounts of this tragedy, but we shall not do ill to follow closely that handed down to us from the clerk Edward Grim, who stood stoutly by his master almost to the end, stood by him till severely hurt himself.[1]

The four murderers, Fitzurse, Moreville, Tracy, and le Bret, arriving in Canterbury on the afternoon of this fatal Tuesday, acted in a curiously hesitating manner, due either to nervousness or to want of any settled plan. After an interview with Becket of which the accounts vary considerably, the murderers retired to arm themselves. But they quickly returned with swords and axes, only to find all entrance barred. But they were not to be baulked, and, guided by Robert de Broc, the custodian of

[1] The curious in this affair should read Dr Edwin A. Abbot's learned *St Thomas of Canterbury: His Death and Miracles* (A. & C. Black, 1898), to which work the writer desires to express a deep debt of gratitude. The account of the murder here given closely follows the translation in the work mentioned.

THE BAPTISTRY, CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

the palace during Becket's long exile, the knights forced their way in through a window. Terror-stricken at the noise, the servants and almost all of the clerks fled like sheep before hungry wolves. Those with the archbishop in his chamber besought him to fly, to seek safety in the church where vespers were being sung; but he strenuously refused, unmoved by either arguments or prayers. Then the monks took courage to act, and half dragging, half pushing, half carrying, forced him to fly. But the door leading into the cloister had some days previous been barred up; yet when one of the monks laid his hand upon the bar it yielded to him, coming out of the socket as "though fastened by nothing stronger than glue." The cross was carried before by the clerk, Henry of Auxerre; and beside Grim there were with him his faithful friend John of Salisbury, his chaplain William Fitzstephen and a few monks. They were now in the cloister and dragged the still unwilling man along the north wall and so on to the chapter house. "What means this, sirs? What is your fear?" he continued asking them, as he angrily resisted their importunity. At last they reached the door opening into the church from the south-east corner of the cloister. As they passed

through, the knights were heard following at full speed; and, on the other hand, the monks who had been singing the vespers, broke off, hastening to meet him, glorifying God because they saw him living and unharmed. So almost in the dark they must have stood, for it was late of a winter afternoon. The monks made to bar the door, but Becket bade them forbear, bidding them not to make "into a tower the house of prayer." The murderers pushed in, with swords unsheathed, shouting, "Where is Thomas Becket, traitor to King and realm?" Receiving no reply, they called again, "Where is the archbishop?" Whereon he advanced to meet them from the steps to which he had been carried by the retreating crowd of monks, and answered, "Here I am, no traitor to the King, but a priest. What do you seek of me?" He turned aside to the right, under a pillar, on one hand the altar of the Virgin and on the other that of St Benedict. The knights followed him, bidding him restore those whom he had excommunicated, only to be met with blank refusal. They attacked him, endeavouring to drag him outside the church; but they could not move him from the pillar. Then one of the knights, to whom Becket spoke roughly as he shook him off, raised

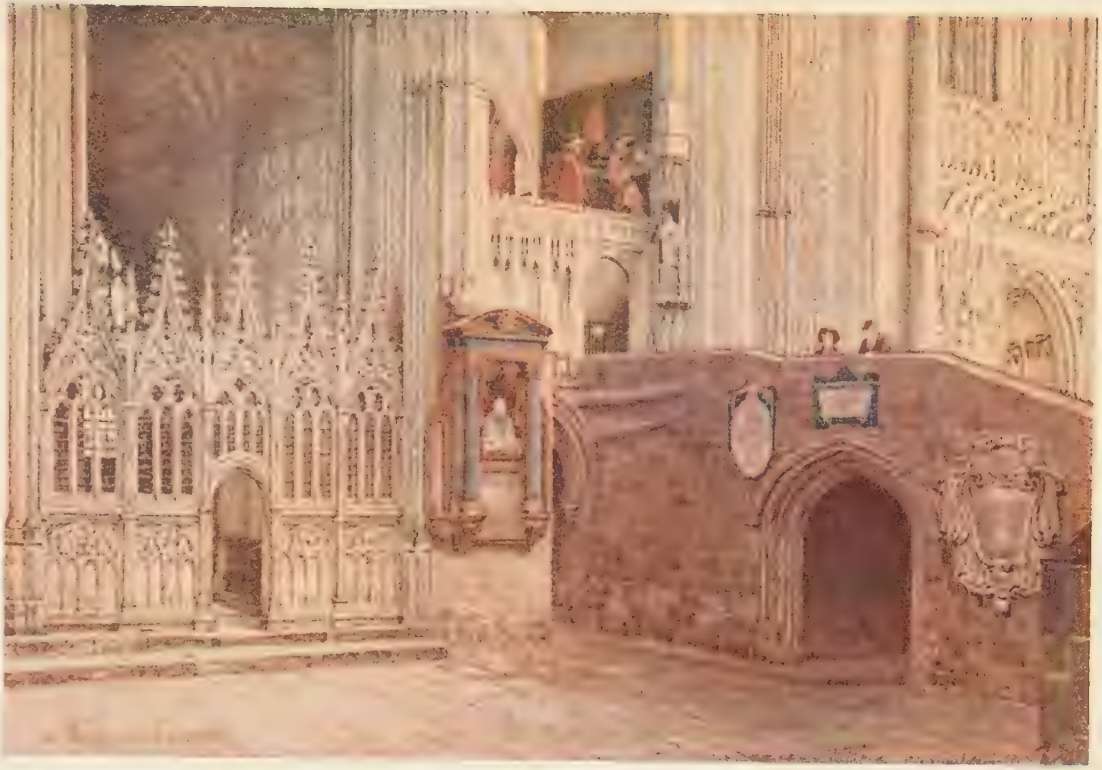
NORMAN STAIRCASE, KING'S SCHOOL, CANTERBURY

his sword to strike, and the archbishop, bending his neck as though for prayer, and raising his hands, prepared for the martyrdom which he seems almost to have sought. The knight struck, shearing away the top of the skull, and with the same blow almost cutting off the arm of Edward Grim, who was supporting him. Another blow and another, then Becket fell on his knees, saying in a low voice, "For the name of Jesus and for the protection of the Church I am prepared to die." Then Bret struck at him, wounding him severely: struck with such violence that he not only shivered his sword against the pavement, but also cut the crown from off the martyr's head so that the blood, whitening from the brain and the brain reddening from the blood, "empurpled the face with the whiteness as of the lily and redness as of the rose, the colours of the Church as Virgin and Mother." Another of the murderers placed his foot on the neck of the prostrate man, and with his sword's point scattered the brains and blood about the pavement, calling out, "Let us go hence! This fellow will not rise again any more." As the murderers fled out into the thick mirk of the night; as the monks cowered in terror in the black darkness of the silent Cathedral; as the crowds

surged anxiously in the narrow streets of the city; as the dead archbishop lay there upon the blood-stained pavement, a few trembling but faithful friends near by,—there burst forth a tempestuous storm of rain and thunder. Then the silence of night and of fear. By-and-by the monks plucked up courage to approach the spot where lay the dead archbishop; turning the body they saw that the face was peaceful, no trace of terror or of wrath, he looked as one sleeping. After binding up the frightful wound in the head, they carried the body through the choir and laid it on a bier before the high altar. There in the dim light of the candles the monks mourned the fallen man, listening to Robert of Merton, who told them that Becket had lived a saint as he had died a martyr, showing them the monk's habit beneath the dead man's garments and the hair shirt next the skin. Then the monks broke out in praises of the man they had sometimes misjudged, knelt, kissed the hands and feet of the corpse, crying "*Saint* Thomas."

The body was first laid to rest in the crypt, until the translation in 1220. In 1173 Becket was canonised, December 29th being the feast of St Thomas of Canterbury. To this tomb in the crypt came Henry II. to do penance for his own

THE MARTYRDOM, CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL



sin and his servants', in the darkest hour of his reign. Barefoot and fasting he came; with rods he was beaten by bishops, abbots and monks; in the crypt he passed the hours of night; so his sin was washed away.

The bones of the martyr brought greater prosperity to the monastery and church than ever it had known, and as their fortunes rose, so those of their rival St Augustine's declined. In 1220 the martyr's remains were translated from the crypt to the new chapel of the Trinity which had arisen from the ashes of the old one burnt down in 1174—moved thither with splendid pomp and ceremony, and laid in a glorious shrine. The feast of the Translation of St Thomas of Canterbury was commemorated for over three hundred years, until by Henry VIII. it was suppressed. To this shrine, glowing with gold and gems, journeyed pilgrims from every quarter of the world; before it they knelt, and were cured of their ills of the flesh and of the spirit; to it they made their offerings, many of great price, such as the magnificent carbuncle, "the Regale of France," which, when Louis VII. was reluctant to part with it, flew from out the ring upon the King's finger and stuck fast to the wall of the shrine.

Here is a description of the shrine by a Venetian who saw it about the year 1500:—"The tomb of St Thomas the Martyr, Archbishop of Canterbury, exceeds all belief. Notwithstanding its great size, it is wholly covered with plates of pure gold; yet the gold is scarcely seen because it is covered with various precious stones, as sapphires, balasses, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds; and wherever the eye turns something more beautiful than the rest is observed. Nor, in addition to these natural beauties, is the skill of art wanting, for in the midst of the gold are the most beautiful sculptured gems both small and large, as well such as are in relief, as agates, onyxes, cornelians, and cameos; and some cameos are of such size, that I am afraid to name it; but everything is far surpassed by a ruby, not longer than a thumb-nail, which is fixed to the right of the altar.[1] The church is somewhat dark, and particularly in the spot where the shrine is placed, and when we went to see it the sun was near setting, and the weather was cloudy; nevertheless I saw that ruby as if I had it in my hand."

Hither came Richard Cœur de Lion from his Austrian prison, Henry V. from Agincourt, and —strange irony of fate—Henry VIII. and the

[1] The King of France's jewel.

Emperor Charles V. Then came the storm of the Reformation; by the King's order the treasures of the shrine were carried off to the royal treasury, and the Regale adorned the thumb of the royal humbug. Of the shrine nothing remains now, nothing but a memory. A memory, only a memory; but no one can realise what mediævalism was, how powerful superstition was, or the place in English and Continental history that Canterbury held for those three hundred years, to whom this memory is not present as he stands where once stood the shrine of St Thomas of Canterbury. We are very far removed from those days, but if we would understand them aright, we must here endeavour to probe the spirit which brought weary pilgrims to this holy shrine, some of them to scoff, but the majority in faith. Nor is it seemly to jeer at that superstition—to those whom it guided it was light in darkness; and maybe we have some superstitions of our own to-day, the folly of which will remain for future generations to point out. So from this darkness of mediævalism let us pass out into the daylight, not foolishly thinking that we have seen all or half all that there is to see, but content if we have drunk in somewhat of the beauty and solemnity of this great church.

CANTERBURY PILGRIMS

When seeking for the bright, sweet English daylight, who better could be our guide than Geoffrey Chaucer?

We have outlined briefly the story of the shrine, and of the resort to it of pilgrims high and low; but in order to paint effectively and to call up a true picture of mediæval Canterbury, let us betake ourselves back through the centuries and set out from Southwark on an April morning, adding our humble selves to that immortal band of Canterbury Pilgrims, who whiled away the tedium of the journey with jest and story. Let Chaucer limn the day for us:—

"Whan that Aprille with his shoures soote
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth

The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,
And smale foweles maken melodye,
That slepen al the nyght with open eye,—
So priketh hem Nature in hir corages,—
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
And palmeres for to seeken straunge strondes,
To ferne halwes kowthe in sondry londes;
And specially, from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunturbury they wende,
The hooly blisful martir for to seke,
That hem hath holpen whan that they were to seeke."

They formed a company of nine-and-twenty, and in fellowship we'll go toward Canterbury, with a right merry cheer. This is our route—

"Lo, Depeford, and it is half wey pryme.
Lo, Grenewych, ther many a shrewe is inne";

then—

"Lo, Rouchestre stant heer faste by!"

and so along our pilgrims' way through the pleasant country of Kent until we reach

"A litel toun,
Which that y-cleped is Bobbe-up-and-doun,
Under the Blee in Caunterbury weye";

maybe Harbledown, where we will loiter anon. And so to close sight of the Angel Steeple and of the hospitable red roofs nestling round the church, wherein stands the shrine we have set forth to see.

Then down the steep way into the city, perchance to the music of Canterbury bells. We have arrived toward dusk, and naturally we shall at once seek out our lodging for the night, as did Chaucer's company—

"When all this fresh feleship were com to Cantirbury." [1]

Alack, we cannot lay our heads under the same roof as did they—

"They took their in and loggit them at mydmorowe, I trowe,
Atte Cheker of the Hope that many a man doth knowe."

There is little room for doubt but that this inn, the "Chequers of the Hope," occupied the west corner of the angle formed by the High Street and Mercery Lane, hard by the old Butter Market and Christchurch Gate. Of the original building only fragments remain, for fire was only too busy here in the year 1865. Here was the dormitory of the Hundred Beds, the Pantry, the Buttery, the Dining Room, and the beautiful garden with its herbs and flowers, to all of which the writer of the "Supplementary Tale" makes reference. In olden days Canterbury might almost have been described

[1] The *Canterbury Tales* of Geoffrey Chaucer Edited by Thomas Wright for the Percy Society, 1851. Vol. iii., "The Supplementary Tale."

SOUTH-WEST TRANSEPT AND ST GEORGE'S TOWER,
CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

as a city of churches, religious houses, and hostelries and other accommodations for pilgrims—that was the atmosphere of mediæval Canterbury. On the opposite side of High Street to the "Chequers" was a lodging for pilgrims erected by Prior Chillenden in the fifteenth century, which was for long years after the Reformation an ordinary inn for travellers.

Pilgrims came throughout the year in companies large and small, but the throng and press was tremendous at the festival of the Martyrdom on December 29, and in summer for the festival of the Translation on July 7, which also was the first day of Canterbury Fair. Larger still the crowds in the years of jubilee, 1270, 1320, 1370, 1420, 1470, and 1520, when on each fiftieth anniversary of the Translation the feast lasted for two weeks and indulgences were granted to all pilgrims.

Beside the inns, there was plenty other accommodation for pilgrims of all degrees, in the hospitals and convents, and, above all, in the Priory of Christ Church.

The city fathers, too, took their share in the festivals, among other entertainments providing a pageant of the Martyrdom; and here follow a few quaint extracts from an account of the expenditure

one year upon the same: "Paid to carpenters hewing and squaring of timber for the pageant, 8d. For making St Thomas's cart, with a pair of wheels, 5s. 8d. Paid a carpenter and his fellows making of the pageant, by four days, taking between them, by the day, finding themselves, 14d., 4s. 8d. . . . For 114 feet of board, bought for flooring the same pageant, 2s. 8d. . . . For nails, 7½d. For tallow for the wheels, 1d. For ale spent 1d. To four men to help to carry the pageant, 8d. . . . For gunpowder, bought at Sandwich, 3s. 4d. . . . For linen cloth for St Thomas's garment, 6d. For a dozen and a half of tin silver, 9d. For glue and pack-thread, 3d. . . . To John a Kent for the hire of a sword, 4d. And for washing of an albe and an amys, 2d."

Our pilgrims, who seem to have arrived fairly early in day,

> "Ordeyned their dyner wisely, or they to church went,"

and then went along Mercery Lane, under the great gateway—as we all still may go—and then broke upon their view a sight different in many ways, yet in many the same as now meets the eye. Dean Stanley has described it well for us: "The pilgrims would stream into the Precincts. The

outside aspect of the Cathedral can be imagined without much difficulty. A wide cemetery, which, with its numerous gravestones, such as that on the south side of Peterborough Cathedral, occupied the vacant space still called the Churchyard, divided from the garden beyond by the old Norman arch since removed to a more convenient spot. In the cemetery were interred such pilgrims as died during their stay in Canterbury. The external aspect of the Cathedral itself, with the exception of the numerous statues which then filled its now vacant niches, must have been much what it is now. Not so its interior. Bright colours on the roof, on the windows, on the monuments; hangings suspended from the rods which may still be seen running from pillar to pillar; chapels, and altars, and chantries intercepting the view, where now all is clear, must have rendered it so different, that at first we should hardly recognise it to be the same building."

Returning to our friends:—

"Whan they wer al y-loggit, as skill wold and reson,
Everich aftir his degre, to chirch then was seson
To pas and to wend, to make their offringis,
Righte as their devocioune was, of silver broch and ryngis.
Then at the chirch dorr the curtesy gan to ryse,
Tyl the knyght, of gentilnes that knewe right well the guyse,

Put forth the prelatis, the parson and his fere.
A monk, that took the spryngill with a manly chere,
And did as the manere is, moilid all thir patis,
Everich after othir, righte as they wer of statis."

After they had been thus sprinkled with the holy water—

"The knyght went with his compers to the holy shryne,
To do that they wer com for, and aftir for to dyne,
The pardoner and the miller, and othir lewde sotes,"

waiting behind, gaping at the beautiful stained glass which then filled the windows of the nave, and wildly guessing at their subjects—

"'Pese!' quod the hoost of Southwork, 'let stond the wyndow glassid,
Goith up and doith your offerynge, ye semith half amasid.'

. . . . . .

Then passid they forth boystly, goggling with their hedis,
Knelid adown tofore the shrine, and hertlich their bedis
They preyd to seint Thomas, in such wyse as the couth;
And sith the holy relikes ech man with his mowith
Kissid, as a goodly monk the names told and taught."

We can follow in their footsteps, presuming them to have taken the more natural and probably more usual way, going first to the transept of the Martyrdom, over an entrance to which was inscribed—

"Est sacer intra locus venerabilis atque beatus
Præsul uti Sanctus Thomas est martyrisatus."

Neither could the pilgrims then nor we now see practically anything of what met the eye on the fatal day itself; nor shall we—as did they—kneel before the wooden altar the while the guardian of it shows to us the precious relics kept there. *But* —if we wish to understand the spirit of the multitude in those days, we must forget ourselves for the nonce, and become as little children of great faith.

Then we pass on down into the crypt under the choir and Trinity Chapel, whose darkness is broken by the light of many lamps. Here, if we are but common folk, we shall be shown only a part of the skull of the saint, to which we may put our lips; his shirt and hair-cloth drawers, which formed one of his chief claims to saintliness—for dirtiness was akin to godliness in those times. If, however, we are folk of high degree, the glowing treasures of the chapel of Our Lady Undercroft will be opened to us.

Then up into the choir, where in coffers of gold and silver and ivory there are hundreds of relics, and, as we have seen—

> ". . . . the holy relikes ech man with his mowith
> Kissid, as a goodly monk the names told and taught."

Of what kind these relics were we have already made note.

In St Andrew's Tower were exhibited to the privileged the pastoral staff of the saint, the cloak and the blood-stained kerchief, even rags and shreds upon which he had wiped his nose and mopped his brow. We do not wish to be irreverent; there are certain relics of pious and saintly men which all can treat with respect if not with adoration; but relic worship ran mad and was too often reduced to absurdity, sometimes of a positively disgusting character.

Onward to the shrine of the saint, first visiting Becket's Crown—the Corona—where we would be shown the portion of the saint's skull which was shorn off by the murderer's sword.

Then to the shrine itself, where lay the holy body, enclosed in splendour which has been described on another page.

The shrine was shown, maybe for the last time, in August 1538, to a Madame de Montreuil, as described in a letter to Cromwell. ". . . . so by ten of the cloc, she . . . . went to the church, where I showed her Sainte Thomas's shrine, and all such things worthy of sight, at which she was not little marveilled of the great riches thereof, saing to be innumerable; and that if she had not seen it, all the men in the wourlde would never a made her to

belyve it. Thus ever looking and viewing more than an oure as well the shryne as Sainct Thomas's bed, being at both sett cushions to knyle, and the Priour opening Saint Thomas's hed, *saing* to her three times, 'This is Sainct Thomas' hed,' and offered her to kysse it, but she nother knyled nor would kysse it, but still viewing the riches thereof."[1]

So for six jubilees continued this throng to come from all the lands of Europe to this shrine in this English city; the shrine of a saint of whom no saintly deed has been recorded.

Then came the downfall, which Hasted has plainly described: "As this saint was stripped of the name, honour, and adoration which had for so great a length of time been paid to him; so was this church, most probably a principal allurement to the dead, robbed of all the riches, the jewels of inestimable value, and the vast quantities of gold and silver, with which this shrine was splendidly and gloriously adorned: his relics and bones were likewise taken away, and so destroyed and disposed of, that what became of them could not be known, least they might fall into such hands as might still honour them with veneration."

[1] *Canterbury in the Olden Time*, John Brent, 1879.

With this adoration of the shrine the great end of the pilgrimage was attained, and our company departed "dyner-ward"—

> "And sith they drowgh to dyner-ward, as it drew to noon.
> Then, as manere and custom is, signes there they bought;
> Fa men of contré shuld know whom they had sought,
> Eche man set his silver in such thing as they likid."

"Signes," among which were small lead bottles, containing water mingled with the blood of the martyr; and leaden brooches, upon which were a representation of the head of the saint, and the words *Caput Thomæ*. So when the pilgrims scattered abroad over the countries from which they had come, both on their journey homeward and on their return, men might know that they had been on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St Thomas of Canterbury; as Erasmus describes them —coming from this and other shrines—"covered with scallop shells, stuck all over with leaden and tin figures, adorned with straw necklaces and a bracelet of serpents' eggs"; also, with scrip and staff, which their priests have blessed for them before they set out on what often was a long and perilous journey. Here is the prayer asking for blessing upon the scrip and staff—"O Lord Jesu Christ, who of Thy unspeakable mercy, at the

THE GREYFRIARS' HOUSE, CANTERBURY

bidding of the Father, and by the co-operation of the Holy Spirit, wast willing to come down from heaven, and to seek the sheep that was lost by the deceit of the Evil One, and to carry him back on Thine own shoulders to the flock of the Heavenly hand; and didst command the sons of Mother Church by prayer to ask, by holy living to seek, and by knocking to persevere; that so they may the more speedily find the reward of saving life; we humbly beseech Thee that Thou wouldest be pleased to bless this scrip and staff, that whosoever for love of Thy Name, shall seek to bear the same by his side, to hang it at his neck, or to carry it in his hands, and so on his pilgrimage to seek the aid of the saints, with the accompaniment of humble prayer, being protected by the guardianship of Thy right hand, may be found worthy to attain unto the joy of the everlasting vision; through Thee, O Saviour of the World, who, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, liveth and reigneth, ever our God, world without end." And when the scrip and staff were given by the priest to the pilgrim, he said: "Take this scrip to be worn as the badge and habit of thy pilgrimage; and this staff to be thy strength and stay in the toil and travail of thy pilgrimage, that thou mayest be able to overcome all the hosts of

the Evil One, and to reach in safety the shrine of the Blessed St Thomas of Canterbury, and the shrines of other saints whither thou desirest to go; and having dutifully completed thy course, mayest come again to thine own people with thanksgiving."

Let not us of these later days take upon us to jest at these "men of old," who "with gladness" set forth upon this pilgrimage. There were sinners and humbugs among them, as there have been and are every time and everywhere; but among them, also, men of humble and contrite hearts. May we not hope that their prayer has been granted, and that the pilgrimage of life brought them at the last "unto the joy of the everlasting vision"?

The Religious

It is impossible to see into the future, all but impossible to see clearly into the past; the past, as the future, often decks itself in colours to which it has no claim. The chief impression on the minds of most of us when we look back to mediæval days, is that they were picturesque if somewhat uncomfortable. But both ways we usually fall short of the fact; they were most picturesque, most uncomfortable. We have seen how once upon a time the Cathedral, now so decorously grey,

blazed with purple and fine linen; so too was it with all life; the very streets now so sober-minded were then a veritable kaleidoscope; all life was highly coloured, save that of the cloister. In those times in the good city of Canterbury it must have been as difficult when one took his walk abroad to avoid the sight of a hospital or of a holy house as to-day to escape from the clangour of church bells.

If we would understand rightly the Canterbury of Becket and Cranmer, we must remember that the rulers of the land were then the King and his nobles and the clergy, the men of arms and the men of peace; there was then no vast and powerful middle class. It is scarcely doubtful that had Augustine not set up his tabernacle in Canterbury that the city would have played but a small part on the stage of English history; she owes her honour and renown to the men of peace who made her their capital in England.

Canterbury never became more than a fairly large country town, yet we find that within her bounds were no fewer than eleven religious houses. With two we are already friendly, the two Benedictine establishments—the abbey of St Augustine and the priory of Christ Church. To the latter

were attached the cells of St Martin at Dover and Canterbury College, Oxford. There were also the Austin Canons' priory of St Gregory; houses belonging to the Dominicans, Franciscans, and Austin Friars; St Sepulchre, St Mildred's; and various hospitals, including St John Baptist's, the Poor Priests', St Lawrence's for lepers, and Eastbridge Hospital. It will help us to travel back if we gain some outline and idea, at any rate, of the "religious" life of those times.

It was thought by many then, as by many now, that a "regular" life, led under strict rule, with self-denial and in retirement from the world, helped men and women to attain nearer to the example of Christ than could otherwise be hoped. The rule of St Benedict was by no means so ascetic as those of some of the other orders. It was introduced into England by Augustine in 597. Then—dealing only with those whom once we should have met often in Canterbury—there were the Dominicans, or Black Friars, so called on account of the black cloak and hood which they wore over their white tunic when they went out of the bounds of their houses; they were a preaching brotherhood, their work in life being to convert the heathen and the heretical; they crossed over to this island in 1221.

The Franciscans, or Grey Friars, also called Minorites, in their humility holding themselves the least of all the orders. The Augustinian, Austin, or Black Canons, a monastic order, whose first foundation in this country was at Holy Trinity, Aldgate. The Austin Friars, the shadow of whose presence lingers familiarly in London ears, were ranked as "mendicants."

Though there were considerable differences between the different "rules," the life and occupations of monks of different orders were, on the whole, not dissimilar. So let us turn back again to the priory of Christ Church and endeavour to restore in our mind's eye some of the monastic buildings that centred round the Cathedral, and the ways and manners and aims of those who dwelt therein. Once for all let us abandon the too common idea that the "religious" led an existence of laziness, and frequently of over-indulgence in the good things of the world from which to so great an extent they had taken a vow of abstinence.

Of the church we have already written sufficient. The building of next importance was always the cloisters, which usually stood to the south of the church, so securing a shelter from cold winds—necessary, indeed, in our climate. Here let us turn

aside for a moment; recall, such of us as can do so, Magdalen College, Oxford, with its chapel, cloisters, hall, and buttery, then we can conjure up at once a general idea of a great monastic establishment. Returning to Canterbury, we find the cloisters nestling on the north side of the church, so situate on account of pressing reasons of space. After the church, after *opus dei*, the life of a monk may be said to have centred in the cloister. Here the novices and junior monks "learned their lessons," which were many and arduous; here the elders put those lessons into daily practice. It cannot have been a sybaritic life; far from it. Then the refectory, or frater, which at Canterbury ran along the north side of the cloisters—and here again we may well recall one of the old college halls, or that beautiful hall of the Middle Temple; the dim beams of the great roof, the dark wainscotting, the screen at the lower end, the daïs at the upper, the long tables running lengthwise; and—what we do not, luckily, see now—the floor strewn with rushes, only too seldom changed. Opening off the cloisters, generally on the east side, the chapter house. The dormitories at Canterbury were situated in the angle formed by the frater and the chapter house. Other buildings of importance were the infirmary,

DOORWAY FROM THE CLOISTERS INTO THE MARTYRDOM

the prior's lodging, the almonry, and ample accommodation for the entertaining of guests.

So that we may not gain too rosy a view of monastic hospitality, let us turn to an account of it given by one of the ungodly, Denys of Burgundy, who had no such stomach for monkish entertainment as had his comrade Gerard. This was his indictment: "Great gate, little gate, so many steps and then a gloomy cloister. Here the dortour; there the great cold refectory, where you must sit mumchance, or at least inaudible. . . . 'And then,' said he, 'nobody is a man here, but all are slaves—and of what? of a peevish, tinkling bell that never sleeps. An 'twere a trumpet now, aye sounding alarums, 'twouldn't freeze a man's heart so. Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, and you must sit to meat with maybe no stomach for food. Ere your meat settles in your stomach, tinkle, tinkle, and ye must to church with maybe no stomach for devotion; I am not a hog at prayers, for one. Tinkle, tinkle, and now you must to bed with your eyes open. Well, by then you have contrived to shut them, some uneasy imp of darkness has got to the bell-rope, and tinkle, tinkle, it behoves you say a prayer in the dark, whether you know one or not. If they heard the sort of prayers I mutter when they

break my rest with their tinkle! Well, you drop off again and get about an eyeful of sleep; lo, it is tinkle, tinkle, for matins.'"

Caricature sometimes tells the truth more understandably than history or realism, and these facetiæ of Denys convey a fairly accurate idea of part of a monk's life. From midnight to midnight it was lived by rule and rote, full of worship, full of work. But it will become us and entertain us to take a more serious view of the hospitality exercised by a great convent. The Guest House, or Hostry, was an important and integral part almost of every monastery. It was the especial duty of one of the senior monks to look to it that everything was ready for the guests who might come. The building devoted to the duties of hospitality were at Canterbury of very considerable size, a hundred and fifty feet long by forty broad, consisting of a main hall, out of which opened small sleeping apartments resembling cubicles. The abbot himself would receive and entertain guests of high degree; merchants and others doing business with the house would be taken charge of by the cellarer. The following passage, quoted by Abbot Gasquet from the *Rites of Durham*, is interesting: "There was a famous house of hospitality, called the

Guest Hall, within the Abbey garth of Durham, on the west side, towards the water, the Terrar of the house being master thereof, as are appointed to give entertainment to all states, both noble, gentle, and whatsoever degree that came thither as strangers, their entertainment not being inferior to any place in England, both for the goodness of their diet, the sweet and dainty furniture of their lodgings, and generally all things necessary for travellers. And, withal, this entertainment continuing, (the monks) not willing or commanding any man to depart, upon his honest and good behaviour. This hall is a goodly brave place, much like unto the body of a church, with very fair pillars supporting it on either side, and in the midst of the hall a most large range for the fire. The chambers and lodgings belonging to it were sweetly kept, and so richly furnished that they were not unpleasant to lie in, especially one chamber called the 'King's chamber,' deserving that name, in that the King himself might very well have lain in it, for the princely linen thereof. . . . The Prior (whose hospitality was such as that there needed no guest-hall, but that they (the Convent) were desirous to abound in all liberal and free almsgiving) did keep a most honourable house and very noble entertain-

ment, being attended upon both with gentlemen and yeomen, of the best in the country, as the honourable service of his house deserved no less. The benevolence thereof, with relief and alms of the whole Convent, was always open and free, not only to the poor of the city of Durham, but to all the poor people of the country besides."

Guests might remain some two days or nights, as a rule, special permission having to be obtained for any longer period.

Yet another quotation, this time from the *Memoirs of the Life of Mr John Inglesant*, wherein he narrates the visit to the Priory of Westacre in Wiltshire of Richard Inglesant, on an errand from the Earl of Essex and on business for the burly King Henry. The Priory was a small house and set in the country, but the impression his first night there made upon him will serve to carry us back along the corridors of time: "In the middle of the summer afternoon he crossed the brow of the hilly common, and saw the roofs of the Priory beneath him surrounded by its woods. The country all about lay peaceful in the soft, mellow sunlight. . . . The house stood with a little walled court in front of it, and a gate-house; and consisted of three buildings—a chapel, a large

hall, and another building containing the Prior's parlour and other rooms on the ground floor, and a long gallery or dormitory above, out of which opened other chambers; the kitchens and stables were near the latter building, on the right side of the court. The Prior received Inglesant with deference, and took him over the house and gardens, pointing out the well-stocked fish-ponds and other conveniences, with no apparent wish of concealing anything. . . . He supped with the Prior in hall, with the rest of the household, and retired with him to the parlour afterwards, where cakes and spiced wine were served to them, and they remained long together. . . . At last Inglesant betook himself to rest in the guest-chamber, a room hung with arras, opening from the gallery where the monks slept. . . . The Prior's care had ordered a fire of wood on the great hearth that lighted up the carved bed and the hunting scene upon the walls. He lay long and could not sleep. All night long, at intervals, came the sound of chanting along the great hall and up the stairs into the dormitory, as the monks sung the service of matins, lauds, and prime."

Yes, it was a busy, pious life that was led in a well-ordered monastery; the service of God and of

man combined to leave few idle moments, and the true religions, we are told, combined "with monastic simplicity an angelic good humour." As men vary outside, so do they within monastic walls: some saints, some sinners; some dour, some sweet; some patient, some hot-blooded. They were human, those old monks, though somehow to-day we are apt to look upon them as either too entirely other-worldly, or too entirely this-worldly.

Before quitting them it will not be unamusing, or, indeed, without instruction, to quote a few passages from Fuller's *The Church-history of Britain from the Birth of Jesus Christ until the Year M.DC.XLVIII.*, in which that worthy writer tells us of "Some generall Conformities observed in all Convents," dealing with "the rule of the antient Benedictines."

"*Let Monks* (after the example of *David*) *praise God seven times a day.*

"1. *At Cock-crowing:* Because the Psalmist saith, *At midnight will I praise the Lord:* and most conceive that Christ rose from the dead about that time.

"2. *Matutines:* at the *first hour*, or *six of the clock*, when the Jewish morning sacrifice was

offered. And at what time Christ's resurrection was by the Angels first notified to the women.

"3. At the *third hour*, or *nine of the clock before none:* when, according to *S. Marke*, Christ was condemned, and scourged by *Pilate.*

"4. At the *sixt hour*, or *twelve of the clock at high noon:* when Christ was crucified and darknesse over all the earth.

"5. At the *ninth hour*, or *three of the clock in the afternoon:* when Christ gave up the ghost, and, which was an hour of publick prayer in the Temple, and privately in his closet with *Cornelius.*

"6. Vespers: at the *twelfth hour*, or *six a clock in the afternoon:* when the evening sacrifice was offered in the Temple, and when Christ is supposed taken down from the Crosse.

"7. At *seven of the clock at night* (or the first hour beginning the nocturnall twelve): when Christ's agonie in the garden was conceived began.

"The first of those was performed at two of the clock in the morning: when the Monks (who went to bed at eight at night) had slept six hours, which were judged sufficient for nature."

Further, we read:—

"Let every Monk have two Coats, and two Cowles, etc."

"Let every Monk have his Table-book, Knife, Needle, and Handkerchief."

"Let the Bed of every Monk have a Mat, Blanket, Rugge, and Pillow."

We may part from them with the words of Hasted in our ears; of the Reformation and of the destruction of Becket's shrine, he says: "This great change could not but seem strange to the people who had still veneration for their reputed saint; and the violence offered to his shrine could not but fill their hearts with inward regret, and private murmurings; but their discontent did not break out into open rebellion here, as it did on some like occasion in different places in the kingdom. To quiet the people, therefore, and to convince them of the propriety, and even necessity, of these changes, the monks were in general cried out against, as given to every shameful and abominable vice; and reports were industriously spread abroad, that the monasteries were receptacles of the worst of people. . . . The greater monasteries were, for the most part, well governed, and lived under the strictest

discipline; . . . they promoted learning, they educated youth, and dispensed charity with a liberal hand to all around them. . . . The Prior, who at the time of the dissolution had presided over this convent for three-and-twenty years, was a learned, grave, and religious man, and his predecessors had been such for a length of time before. The convent was a society of grave persons; the aged were diligent to train up the novices both in the rules of their institution, and in gravity and sobriety. . . . All their revenues and gains were expended, either in alms and hospitality, or in the stately and magnificent building of their church. . . . Their time was for the most part spent in exercises of fasting, penance, and devout meditations, and in attending the divine offices in the church."

The lives of nuns in convents of women were to all intents and purposes practically the same as those led by monks, so we will visit for a few minutes—in spirit—the nunnery of St Sepulchre, which stood near the old Riding-gate. It was founded by St Anselm about the year 1100 for Benedictine nuns, whose lives were passed very much in accordance with those of their brother monks. Hasted tells us that Prior Walter, of

Christ Church, gave to the nunnery "as much wood as one horse, going twice a day, could fetch thence, where the wood reeves should appoint"—namely, from the wood of Blean, beyond Harbledown; "but there being much uncertainty in this grant, the nuns, in 1270, releasing it, procured in lien and by way of exchange for it a certain portion of the above-mentioned wood to be assigned and made over to them; which wood retains from these nuns the name of Minchen Wood at this time." And further on he says discreetly, "Time and indulgence of superiors bringing their corruptions, nuns became in process of time not such recluses as their order required." So in 1305 steps were taken by Archbishop Winchelsea to keep them more straitly. It was here that the Holy Maid of Kent, "the great impostor of her time, was a veiled nun and votaress."

The story of Elizabeth Barton, more generally known as the Holy Maid of Kent, throws not a few curious lights upon the beliefs and manners of the sixteenth century. She was born in or about the year 1506, and when about nineteen years old was living in the service of Thomas Cobb, who was steward to an estate of Archbishop Warham at Aldington, which lies four miles south-east of

Ashford, commanding an extensive prospect over Romney Marsh. The living here, St Martin's, was presented by Warham to Erasmus in 1511, but he held it for only a few months.

She was afflicted with some form of nervous complaint, which exhibited itself in the form of trances or fits; for days together she would lie half conscious, giving vent to wondrous sayings, telling of events in other places of which apparently she could have no knowledge, and holding forth in marvellous words in the rebuke of sin. It can scarce be wondered at that the ignorant and superstitious neighbours were amazed and that they began to talk of her, some saying that she was inspired of the Holy Spirit, others that a devil possessed her. Her master consulted the village priest, Richard Masters, and together they watched the girl, coming to the conclusion that it was a good and not an evil spirit that was speaking through the mouth of the Maid. The affair was brought to the notice of the archbishop by the priest, and a gracious message of encouragement was sent to the girl. But as the months passed by her illness left her, and she missed the notoriety which she had gained, although she was still held in pious reverence by friends and neighbours. She

was unable to resist the temptation to feign a continuance of her trances and inspired utterances.

Her renown spread abroad and Warham decided that the matter should be inquired into, sending down two monks of Christ Church, Edward Bocking and William Hadley. Bocking is believed to have been educated at Canterbury College, Oxford, now Christ Church, and to have been warden there. He left there for Christ Church, Canterbury, probably in 1526, the fatal year in which he was despatched upon this mission of inquiry. We know not what manner of man he was, save for these dealings of his with the Maid; could we gain the details of his story, it would add another and striking chapter to the history of villainy. He saw in Elizabeth a tool, which would be useful to him if he could but temper it. He instructed her in the Catholic legendary lore, and taught her to argue with and to refute heretics. Strype includes Masters in the plot, as thus: "And to serve himself of this woman and her fits, for his own benefit, he, with one Dr Bocking, a monk of Canterbury, directed her to say in one of her trances, that she should never be well till she visited the image of Our Lady in a certain chapel in the said Masters' parish, called the chapel in Court-at-

Street; and that Our Lady had appeared to her, and told her so; and that if she came on a certain day thither, she should be restored to health by miracle. This story, and the day of her resort unto the chapel, was studiously given out by the said parson and monk; so that at the appointed day there met two thousand persons to see this maid, and the miracle to be wrought on her. Thither at the set time she came, and there, before them all, disfigured herself, and pretended her ecstasies. . . . In her trance in this chapel she gave out, that Our Lady bade her become a nun, and that Dr Bocking should be her ghostly father." Also the "spirit" moved her further: "It spake also many things for the confirmation of pilgrimages and trentals, hearing of masses and confessions, and many other such things." "And one Thwaites, a gentleman, wrote a great book of her feigned miracles, for a copy to the printer, to be printed off," which was called *A Miraculous Work of late done at Court-of-Strete in Kent, published to the Devoute People of this Tyme for their Spiritual Consolation.* Soon after this exhibition she was admitted to the priory of St Sepulchre at Canterbury, and became known as the Nun of Kent. She was wise enough to stifle rivalry, for "there was

one Hellen, a maid dwelling about Totnam, that had visions and trances also. She came to this holy Maid and told her of them. But she assured her (it may be because she had a mind to have the sole glory of such visions herself) that hers were but delusions of the Devil; and advised her from henceforth not to entertain them, but to cast them out of her mind." Other monks assisted Bocking in the deception.

"Archbishop Warham having a roll of many sayings which she spake in her pretended trances, some whereof were in very rude rhymes, sent them up to the King; which, however revered by others, he made but light of, and showed them to More, bidding him show his thoughts thereof. Which after he had perused, he told the King, that in good faith (for that oath he used) he found nothing in them that he could either esteem or regard: for a simple woman, in his mind, of her own wit might have spoken them."

Then, unfortunately for herself, Elizabeth embarked on the dangerous sea of politics, especially unsafe in those days when the axe or the rope put a stop to any unfavourable comment. As when the divorce of Catherine came upon the tapis, and Elizabeth indulged herself in expressing such

opinions as these, embodied in a fantastic tale "of an angel that appeared, and bade 'her' go unto the King, that infidel Prince of England, and say, that I command him to amend his life; and that he leave three things which he loveth, and purposeth upon; that is, that he take off the Pope's right and patrimony from him. The second, that he destroy all these new folks of opinion, and the works of their *new learning*. The third, that if he married and took Anne to wife, the vengeance of God plague him." But Henry was not moved, unless it was to anger; Warham was convinced of the Maid's holiness, and withdrew his promise to marry Henry; further, he persuaded Wolsey to see her, with exactly what result is not definitely known. She gained vast popularity as Catherine's champion, and many noble persons became her patrons. She even went to the extreme length of forcing herself into the King's presence when he visited Canterbury. Anne did not die within a month of her marriage, as the Maid had predicted, so she added to her offences by declaring that Henry was before God no longer King. Cranmer, who had succeeded Warham, ordered the Maid to be subjected to a strict examination. Eventually, in September 1533, she confessed her fraud: "she

never had visions in all her life, but all that she ever said was feigned of her own imagination, only to satisfy the minds of those which resorted to her, and to obtain worldly praise." Her counsellors, including Bocking, Hadley, Masters, and Thwaites, were committed to the Tower, brought before the Star Chamber, and they too confessed. So the plot exploded. A scaffold was erected near to Paul's Cross, from which the Nun and her chief aiders and abettors read their confessions; this function was repeated at Canterbury in the churchyard of the monastery of Holy Trinity. We need not here go into the political capital which Cromwell made out of the intimacy of various enemies of the King with the Maid.

On the 20th April 1534, the unhappy girl and others were done to death at Tyburn; and these were her last words: "Hither I am come to die; and I have not been only the cause of mine own death, which most justly I have deserved, but also I am the cause of the death of all those persons, which at this time here suffer. And yet, to say the truth, I am not so much to be blamed, considering that it was well known to these learned men that I was a poor wench, without learning; and therefore they might easily have perceived,

that the things that were done by me could not proceed in no such sort; but their capacities and learning could right well judge from whence they proceeded, and that they were altogether feigned: but because the thing which I feigned was profitable to them, therefore they much praised me; and bore me in hand, that it was the Holy Ghost, and not I, that did them; and then I, being puffed up with their praises, fell into a certain pride and foolish fantasy with myself, and thought I might feign what I would; which thing hath brought me to this case; and for other which now I cry God and the King's highness most heartily mercy, and desire you all, good people, to pray to God to have mercy on me, and on all them that here suffer with me."

There is tragedy lurking there, and light upon those days. But can we laugh—we who are without superstition and too often without respect?

Other Shrines

There is an old house outside the West Gate, built about 1563 on the site of an hostel, where, when the city gates were shut of a night time, belated pilgrims were wont to seek refreshment and rest. But as we stand and look at the ancient

gables, and think of those still more ancient which these replaced, does any Canterbury Pilgrim come forth to greet us? No; but we have "stopped before a very old house bulging out over the road; a house with long, low lattice-windows bulging out still farther, and beams with carved heads on the ends bulging out too, so that," we fancied, "the whole house was leaning forward, trying to see who was passing on the narrow pavement below. It was quite spotless in its cleanliness. The old-fashioned brass knocker on the low arched door, ornamented with carved garlands of fruit and flowers, twinkled like a star; the two stone steps descending to the door were as white as if they had been covered with fair linen; and all the angles and corners, and carvings and mouldings, and quaint little panes of glass, and quainter little windows, though as old as the hills, were as pure as any snow that ever fell upon the hills."

We have never seen Uriah Heep peeping slyly out of those quaint little windows, for somehow Uriah has never quite lived for us; but we have seen Agnes there, to whom David eventually lost his heart—which has always seemed to us an unwise proceeding, for men do not like taking a permanent second place by marrying their

WESTGATE, CANTERBURY

guardian angels; there have looked out at us old Mr Wickfield and young David, Miss Betsy Trotwood and Mr Dick—all very much alive. Then it is delightful on a frosty morning to see Doctor Strong bestowing his gaiters "on a beggar-woman, who occasioned some scandal in the neighbourhood by exhibiting a fine infant from door to door, wrapped in those garments, which were universally recognised, being as well known in the vicinity as the Cathedral." But who would wish to meet the Old Soldier? And was it not Mr Micawber who came to "see the Cathedral. Firstly, on account of its being so well worth seeing. . . . And secondly, on account of the great probability of something turning up in a cathedral town"? Then we may sit, if we list, with little David in the Cathedral any Sunday morning, the sunless air, the sensation of the world being shut out, the resounding of the organ through the black-and-white arched galleries and aisles affecting us as they did him, being as wings that take us back to childish days.

A giant of a man meets us in these city streets, a long-legged, white-haired, bespectacled man, one who signed a letter "W. M. T.," in which he wrote: "I passed an hour in the Cathedral, which seemed

all beautiful to me; the fifteenth century part, the thirteenth century part, and the crypt above all, which they say is older than the Conquest. . . . Fancy the church quite full; the altar lined with pontifical gentlemen bobbing up and down; the dear little boys in white and red flinging about the incense pots; the music roaring out from the organs; all the monks and the clergy in their stalls, and the archbishop on his throne—oh, how fine! And then think of the ✠ of our Lord speaking quite simply to simple Syrian people, a child or two maybe at his knees, as he taught them that love was the truth." Thus spake Thackeray the cynic.

In the days of Elizabeth—to be exact, in the year 1561, on May 22nd—John Marlowe was married to Catherine Arthur in the church of St George the Martyr, the said John being a man of some standing and a member later of the Guild of Shoemakers and Tanners. Then in the same church, in the year 1564, on February 26th was christened Christopher, the eldest son of the above. The boy when fourteen years of age won a scholarship in the King's School, of which the master then was Nicholas Goldsborough. When Kit left the school we know not; he went to Corpus Christi

College, Cambridge; he went to London; he wrote *Faustus, Tamburlaine the Great, The Rich Jew of Malta, Edward II., Hero and Leander*; sang

"Come live with me and be my love."

And there is a foolish monument to him, where once stood the butter-market, outside Christ Church gate. Of the man's manner and appearance we know not anything; his works live, but the man is dead even to our mind's eye. Yet there are some of us who would rather meet his shadow here than even those of Chaucer and of Dickens; perchance because we know him not.

Canterbury is yet in many ways a mediæval city, despite railways and electric lights. We can enter it by the fourteenth century West Gate, built by Archbishop Simon of Sudbury, the one gateway mercifully spared to us out of six; then we can walk down an old-world High Street, overlooked by beetle-browed, gabled houses. Is not the King's Bridge and the old home of the Canterbury Weavers quaintly beautiful? This old house dates back possibly to the fifteenth century, of course having been pulled about more or less by rude restorers; at any rate it is old, at any rate it is quaint. Stand thereby on a moonlit night, drink

in the picturesqueness of the dark masses of black shadow and reflection, the bright masses of cold light; there is no corner more charming in Nuremberg or Rothenberg; the sluggish waters of the many-branched Stour flow beneath, and the air is tremulous with the chiming of bells from many a steeple. The passers-by of to-day are not those whom we should see, for we should bend our mind's eye on monk, priest and pilgrim, on knight, dame and squire, or king, queen and prince; it needs no vivid imagination to call up these shades of the past. But above all and through all the pageantry of old days looms the church; Canterbury is a city of churches, of priories, monasteries, hospitals. There is St Dunstan's, where in the Roper vault they say is the head of Sir Thomas More; St Alphege, with a curious epitaph referring to dancing in the churchyard; St Margaret's, where sleeps Somner, antiquary and loyalist; St Peter's, once used by a French congregation; and many another. The Black Friars, the Grey Friars, the White Friars, all had houses in Canterbury. On the banks of the river, hard by St Peter's, the Black Friars in the reign of Henry III. founded one of their first homes, and now their ancient refectory is a Unitarian Baptist Chapel! Therein Daniel Defoe was wont

THE CANTERBURY WEAVERS

to preach. A portion of the house of the Grey Friars still stands on arches above the waters of the river; but as we look on it of no friar do we think, but of the gay cavalier, Richard Lovelace, gallant and poet, who sang—

> "When flowing cups run swiftly round
> With no allaying Thames,
> Our careless heads with roses crown'd,
> Our hearts with loyal flames;
> When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
> When healths and draughts go free—
> Fishes that tipple in the deep
> Know no such liberty."

But he wrote other and more pleasing verses, though none more curious. The Brethren of St Francis, the Franciscans or Grey Friars, came to this country in the first quarter of the thirteenth century, and their first habitation was this in Canterbury. They numbered but nine, these first comers, of whom only one was a priest, a man of Norfolk, by name Richard Ingworth. The monks of Christ Church were hospitable to them; they acquired a small piece of land and built thereon a wooden chapel. But it was felt to be incumbent on this begging fraternity not to become owners of land, so the donors of this plot handed it over to the city to be held for the friars.

They did not, however, remain on their original site, but moved in 1270 to a tiny island in the Stour called Bynnewith. Henry Beale, mayor in 1478, was buried in their church. Then in bad time came Henry VIII., and the brotherhood was turned out of house and home. In the days of Good Queen Bess the house was in the possession of the Lovelaces; so here dwelt Colonel Richard, cavalier and poet, who wrote this immortal lyric:—

"Tell me not, Sweet, I am unkind
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind,
To war and arms I fly.

"True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

"Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee, Dear, so much,
Loved I not Honour more."

Then there are the East Bridge Hospital, possibly founded by Becket for "wayfaring and hurt men," now an almshouse, and St John's Hospital, with its charming half-timber gateway, and others. And what should such a city do without a castle? Yet the good citizens are content

with a neglected ruin, the remnants of a fortress first built in the twelfth century, and full of historic memory. But castles have no living faith to keep them whole and sound; they have no usefulness, and this is a utilitarian age. Indeed, it is solely due to accident that any part of the fine old keep remains, for in the early years of last century the city fathers decided to utilise it as a quarry. But modern picks found ancient cement too strong for them, and the undertaking, not proving remunerative, was abandoned. It would have been a gross blunder to leave Canterbury unfortified, standing as it did upon the most important coast road in the kingdom. The keep was completed about 1125, and the castle further strengthened by Henry II. At one period it was the principal county prison. Here it stands amid the prosaic modernity of to-day, a hoar and unhonoured relic of the wild past.

From this desecration we turn to the leafy walks that surround the Dane John, that mysterious mound whose principal use has been to afford sport for etymological antiquaries. Donjon, we are told it may be rightly; may be also wrongly. Best had we mount the steps to the summit of the city wall, hereabouts in a wonderfully good state of preservation, and walk along it

toward the cattle-market and so on to St Augustine's College. Here we touch fingers with pagan days, for on this spot, so it is related, Ethelbert worshipped the gods of his fathers. To St Augustine he gave this temple, though such a high-sounding name misfits what was doubtless a modest erection, and it was consecrated as a Christian church in the name of St Pancras. Between it and the city rose the Benedictine monastery of St Peter and St Paul, afterward dedicated also to Augustine himself and by his name thenceforth generally known. In July 1538 came the downfall with the arrival of Henry VIII.'s commissioners; there was a demonstration of resistance on the part of the monks, but cannon provided a conclusive argument; and then the end, the glory departed. Here were buried not only Augustine, but King Ethelbert and many of the archbishops. The saint who came as an apostle of Christianity to Kent founded this great monastery; now it is a missionary college of the Church of England, whence preachers of Christ's teaching go forth to the ends of the earth. On the saint's tomb could once be read a brief epitome of the events of his stirring life: "Here resteth the Lord Augustine, first Arch-

IN THE QUADRANGLE, ST AUGUSTINE'S COLLEGE,
CANTERBURY

bishop of Canterbury, who erewhile was sent hither by Blessed Gregory, Bishop of the City of Rome, and being helped by God to work miracles, drew over King Ethelbert and his race from the worship of idols to the faith of Christ. Having ended in peace the days of his ministry, he departed hence seven days before the Kalends of June in the reign of the same king, A.D. 605."

To King Ethelbert, a heathen, and to Bertha, his queen, a Christian, came Augustine to preach the gospel; and Christian worship he found carried on by Lindhard, the queen's French chaplain, in a small chapel standing outside the city walls, the present church of St Martin, altered in aspect, but the "mother church of England." Through the mists of centuries we cannot clearly see; we know not how far well or ill disposed toward Christianity the King may have been; at any rate, as he permitted his queen to follow her creed, his disposition cannot have been actively evil. The King met the band of missionaries in the Isle of Thanet, promised not to molest them, and to give them all that was needed for their support, with permission to make all the converts they could. From the island Augustine and his comrades crossed to Richborough, the old Roman fortress

of Rutupiæ, and so on by the Roman road toward Canterbury. On the slope of St Martin's Hill the welcome sight of a Christian place of worship met their eyes, light amid darkness. As Augustine stood on the height, looking over the rude city on the islands of the Stour, did any prophetic vision come to him? His heart was doubtless high with hope, but he dared not have dreamed that the future was to be so glorious as we know it to have been. Then came the baptism of Ethelbert on Whitsunday in the year 597, in St Martin's Church, and as usual, even in later days, the example of a king soon set a fashion. Of St Pancras' Church we already know the story. Of the first cathedral in Canterbury no stone remains. When the saint died he was buried not far from the roadside, the Kent and Canterbury Hospital occupying the ground where his bones rested—until they were translated to the church of the monastery he had founded but had not lived to see completed. It is told of a stern soldier that he desired to be buried by the roadside, so that he might hear the tramp of the troops as they marched by to war; is it too far-fetched to think of the missionary Augustine lying asleep somewhere near by the college that has succeeded to his monastery,

comforted by the sound of voices that like his are to preach the gospel to the heathen? Indeed, Canterbury is a city of great memories.

Augustine was, of course, the monastery's chief treasure, and next came the body of St Mildred which was given to the house by Canute. It must never be forgotten by those who would look at things mediæval with mediæval eyes, that in those days the dead were more powerful than the living; even kings humbled themselves before the bones of dead saints. This relic worship became almost a madness, and the rage seized upon monks and their rulers, who stooped to the meanest thefts in order to possess themselves of such valuables. It is related that the monks of St Augustine's Abbey offered to make Roger, the keeper of the altar of the Martyrdom, their abbot, if only he would steal for them the fragment of Becket's skull which was entrusted to his charge. He fell to the temptation, and rose to be ruler of the rival house. For many a long year indeed St Augustine's dominated and domineered over Christ Church; and for more than one reason. The former was an abbey, the latter but a mere priory; in the precincts of the former was buried England's apostle Augustine, and Ethelbert, Augustine's successor Lawrence—indeed,

the first eight occupants of the archiepiscopal throne. How could a poor cathedral with never an archbishop's bones hope to contend with such favoured rivalry? So St Cuthbert, the ninth archbishop, came to the rescue, preferring to lay his bones in his own cathedral rather than in the church of the rival establishment. He foresaw the difficulties that would arise; provided against them by procuring from the King of Kent and from the Pope an authorisation to be buried within the city walls, which he handed to the sorrowing monks as he lay adying, bidding them also to bury him first and toll the bell afterward. So it came to pass that when Abbot Aldhelm and the monks of St Augustine's came to claim their lawful prey, they were defeated and retired in dismay. They struggled once more over the body of the succeeding Archbishop Bregwin, and then succumbed to the inevitable. The glory of the Cathedral waxed; it covered the graves of St Dunstan, St Alphege, and St Anselm; then came St Thomas and eclipse to St Augustine.

Of the church but a few fragments remain, though at the beginning of last century Ethelbert's Tower, built about 1047, was still standing. South of the church are the remains of St Pancras'

Church, where excavations have revealed much of interest.

After the heavy hand of Henry VIII. had fallen on it, the abbey served him as a palace, afterward coming into the possession of many owners, and at length reaching a deep depth of degradation and ruin. From this it was rescued by Mr A. J. Beresford Hope in 1844, and was eventually incorporated as a college to provide "an education to qualify young men for the service of the Church in the distant dependencies of the British Empire, with such strict regard to economy and frugality of habit as may fit them for the special duties to be discharged, the difficulties to be encountered, and the hardships to be endured." The college buildings were designed by Mr Butterfield, and opened in 1848 on St Peter's Day. Of the old abbey, several buildings have been "worked into" the new college; one of the most important is the fourteenth century gateway, which is the main entrance, and above the archway of which is the State bedchamber, in which Elizabeth and other monarchs have rested their royal bones. The College Hall is the old Guesten Hall, and retains the ancient open-work roof.

But somehow there does not shimmer round St Augustine's the romance of history; it is too closely

in touch with to-day to allow us to dream of its yesterday. We meet no shadowy figures there of abbot or monk, of prince or soldier, hear no echoes of the clash of arms or of the voices of singers. It is as dead to us as the Cathedral and the quaint streets near by are alive.

From the city the Longport Road leads up a gentle ascent to St Martin's. To whom this church was first dedicated is uncertain. Of the Roman building only some of the bricks remain; it was to some extent restored by the Normans, and to a great extent rebuilt in the thirteenth century.

The first feeling as we enter the churchyard and look upon this famous House of God is one of disappointment; there is something rough and homely about the clumsy walls of stones, flint, and Roman tiles, and the squat tower, creeper clad. But the associations of the little building render it lovely to us. No matter what the faith may be of him who stands in this seemly God's-acre, he cannot but be profoundly impressed by the view as he turns first to the spot where Augustine baptised the heathen king, and then toward the soaring Cathedral tower, beneath whose shadow lie buried so many Christian kings and rulers. The very building "has had a remarkable history, surviving

ST MARTIN'S CHURCH, CANTERBURY

disuse and decay, surviving the savage destructiveness of Jutes, the devastation of Danish invaders, the innovating rigour of Norman architects, and the apathy of succeeding centuries." Setting our backs to the older we turn to later days and to-day, as we walk home to the city. The sun is setting; the sky panoplied in gold; lights shine out here and there from homely windows; workmen tramp to their rest; there is a gentle melancholy reigning over all things, as there ever is in ancient cities; above all broods the Cathedral, its splendid tower, steeped in the rays of the departing day, looking down as though it were no handiwork of mortal man, but some creation of Nature, immutable, inscrutable, full of majesty, of power, of everlasting dignity.

A CANTERBURY ROUND-ABOUT

THERE are many delightful places round about Canterbury, beautiful to look on and historically of the greatest interest. We set out of a morning along Northgate, passing the fine half-timbered gateway of St John's Hospital, which was founded by Lanfranc, in the year 1084, for the comfort of the aged who were poor and infirm. The entrance is a most beautiful piece of fifteenth century timber-work, one of the most delightful "bits" in Canterbury, and the enclosure within is a veritable harbour of refuge from the noise and the turmoil without. The west door of the chapel is Norman, and there are other fragments which will interest the architect. In the hall is preserved a sixteenth century account-book, from which we quote this curious item: "Note that Laurence Wryght was admonished the xxviij daye of Maye the fyrst yere

of Kyng Edwarde the vjth for sclanderyng of the prior Christofer Sprott and the pryors syster Margaret Forster for dwellyng yn to tenements under on rofe. Wyttnesses brother Wyllyam Pendleton, brother Wyllyam Kytson"; one more sad proof that brethren do not always dwell together in unity or amity.

On, past the depressing range of barracks and along the straight, level road to Sturry. Esturei, the island in the Stour, is a pleasing, old-fashioned village, with ample accommodation for the refreshment of man and beast. The church of St Nicholas stands guarded by a grove of chestnut-trees, and hard by are the remains, including the gate, of Sturry Court, dating from the reign of James I. Turning to the right just beyond the Welsh Harp Inn—how does such a sign come here?—we reach in a few minutes Fordwich bridge, beneath which flows the narrow waters of the Stour; once on a time the scene of busy traffic, for we are looking on the ancient port of Canterbury. How changed the scene, now so quiet and out-of-the-world, since the days when this was a tidal water, since an arm of the sea covered the valley of the Stour as far up as Chilham, beyond Canterbury. Up to Fordwich—possibly Fiord Wich—in

olden days large vessels could be navigated, hence the importance of the place for trading purposes. Domesday Book records that there were seven fisheries and ten mills here—a busy, thriving place, now the home of memories. The Abbey of St Augustine owned the manor here, by gift from Edward the Confessor and others, and the monks and the townspeople do not appear to have lived upon the best of terms. The monks of Christ Church also traded here, and their presence does not appear to have made for peace. Fordwich was a "limb" of the Sandwich Cinque Port, on the same river but fourteen miles farther down the stream, sharing with that ancient and once glorious town the ship service, so valuable to the kings of England. Until 1861 Fordwich possessed a corporation, the first mayor in 1292 being one John Maynard. The government consisted of the mayor, twelve jurats, the freemen, and various officers, whose powers included those of life and death. The works of Nature and of man have combined to destroy the commercial prosperity of the erstwhile port; the Wantsum—which cut off Thanet from the mainland—has ceased to be; the Stour has silted up, to the detriment also of decayed Sandwich; and Canterbury is connected with the

sea by railways to Whitstable, Faversham, and Dover.

Therefore as we stand upon this little bridge of stone, though the prospect has many charms it is tinged with the sadness of decay and death. There is the ancient crane of wood, now usually idle ; and the river-banks once so busy are now deserted save by occasional merry-makers and water parties. Much water has flowed beneath this bridge since Fordwich was a thriving sea-port, but less and less year by year—the tide of prosperity has ebbed with the tides of the sea; all that is left is but a memory and a few pieces of wreckage on the shore of time.

Passing over the bridge we walk through the deserted village, for such it appears to be at this hour of noon, until we come to the sign of the Fordwich Arms, where we may rest and restore. Opposite the inn is the Town Hall, of which we have heard so much that its diminutive size is somewhat startling. It is a square building with high-pitched, tiled roof; the upper story is half timbered, overhanging the lower of mingled stone and brick. Ascending a steep, short flight of modern wooden stairs, we enter the quaint Council Chamber—quaint in its tininess as compared with

the matters of import once enacted therein; it is little more than thirty feet long by twenty-three broad, and is lighted by three windows of lattice. The wall opposite to the entrance is wainscoted, in the centre being the mayor's seat, with those of the jurats on either hand; and, above, the royal arms and those of the Cinque Ports, with the legend below—"1660. Love and Honour the Truth"; and we will trust that the mayor and jurats did so, for their powers were great. Across the room runs a heavy black beam, on either end of which stand two gaudy drums, once beaten by the heavy hands of the pressgang; and in the centre the village cucking-stool, the use of which is deemed no longer necessary. It is said—with what want of truth who shall decide?—that a sort of cupboard high up in the wall, was used as a drying loft for the unfortunate ladies after they had been immersed. Women had more wrongs than rights in those forceful days. On the ground floor is the lock-up, a chilly place, now a mere curiosity; once a very stern reality to debtors, poachers and greater malefactors.

Turning back from the river, we proceed to the church, surrounded by a grassy graveyard; there is not much to detain us here, the building being

chiefly interesting for its old-world air. There is the pew once used by the mayor and another for the singers and players, who aforetime sat aloft in the gallery beneath the tower; a Norman font and a fine tomb, which possibly was that of the founder of the church. In the woodwork of the gallery at the west end are two shelves, upon which were placed the loaves of bread to be distributed on a Sunday to the poor, under the bequest of Thomas Bigge.

We can return to Canterbury by another and more pleasant route than that by which we came. Following the road uphill, past the pretty cottage where we obtained the keys of the church, we turn to the right, so gaining a cleanly field path. Before us rise low grassy knolls; behind us, screened by trees, the spire of Fordwich church and the gables of its houses and cottages; on our right hand the broad, flat valley of the Stour, the Sturry Road marked by the straight line of trees. Bobbing up and down goes the path, so that we scarcely note that we are gradually ascending, until suddenly we find ourselves high up, looking down on the outskirts of Canterbury; beneath us the trumpets ring out from the barracks notes of modernity and echoes of old fighting days; before us soars the

tower of the Cathedral, shrouded—when we saw it —in mists and wisps of falling rain; on our left the level ground where the cavalry exercise. Along this track for sure, when in old days the valley was a swamp, many a weary traveller has toiled from the coast unto the old city; how their hearts must have leaped within them as they saw rising there the Angel Steeple, perhaps bathed in the rays of the setting sun, perchance veiled in sorrowful clouds. As did we, so must they have passed on down the slope to St Martin's Church, and so to the city gate, now vanished. It is but a short walk this which we have taken, short in the distance we traverse, but it takes us back to dim, far gone ages; now the train, with its pennant of white, thunders along the valley, where of old coracles have floated, and we return from our visit to a village that may be called a mile-stone on the road of history, to a great cathedral city, where Britons shivered in mud and wicker hovels on the reedy islets of the Stour.

On a fresh and breezy morning, the sky washed clean by the rain and flecked with thin white clouds, we walked out by the West Gate on our way to Harbledown, by many held to be Chaucer's "little town" which "y-cleped is Bob-up-and-down, Under

THE CATHEDRAL, ST MARTIN'S CHURCH TOWER,
AND HARBLEDOWN

From the Priory Garden, Canterbury

the Blee in Canterbury way." Turning along the London Road to the left, the road to Whitstable running right ahead, we soon found ourselves leaving the main road by a small lane, the Canterbury end of the famous Pilgrims' Way from Winchester. How ancient this track may be no man knows; but it was in existence long before pilgrimages were dreamed of, before Christianity had come to the country, being utilised probably for the conveyance of metals and merchandise from the west to the east. Soon we have clambered through the mud to the summit of a little hill, from which we gain a wide view of the surrounding country. Before us stands out Bigberry Wood, with its ancient camp; turning to the left, on either side the mill, whose sails are at rest, we see Canterbury spread out in the broad valley, which to the eyes of the earliest wayfarers by this route presented a desolate scene of marsh and woodland. Turning to our right there are the hop fields, with gaunt bare poles; the red roofs of Sidney Cooper's home; and, farther round, Harbledown and the Hospital of St Nicholas. We go on down the slippery descent, until we reach a brawling stream, spanned by a small wooden bridge; keeping to our right, through the hop field, we soon find a path

clambering up toward the hospital, and suddenly before us the stone archway covering the well known by the name of the Black Prince. Primroses are peeping forth out of the abundant winter foliage; but for some reason we cannot call up much interest in this well, ancient though it be, perhaps because of the falsity of the story that connects it with the Black Prince. A few yards higher and we find ourselves behind the long, low building of the hospital, and then we stand within what we may call the precincts. This lazar house was founded by the busy Lanfranc, and the west door of the church is Norman work. The interior of this edifice is well worth visiting; there is about it—though restored—a savour of old-world days and a pathos of suffering, as we think of the leprous men and women who have worshipped here long days ago. The Norman carving on some of the pillars is good, and the roof a fine example of the strength of old work. In the chancel are some old seats, and some benches older still in the body of the church. Old—how old! echoes through our mind as we stand here, and again as we lay our hands on the ancient gnarled tree in the churchyard; how old it all is, this church set high upon the hill, overlooking a vast stretch of valleys and

uplands. What sights has this old tree looked down upon, what sounds heard—troops marching by to the war, pilgrims marching by to the shrine of St Thomas (for we are looking down on the road to London). How the coaches toiled up these hills a century ago. And even as we listen, we hear the rush and trumpeting of a motor-car.

The other buildings are of modern years; in the centre of the neat dwelling-houses stands the hall, where various relics are preserved and made into a raree-show, the only one that touched home to us being the old collecting box, which was formerly hung up outside the gate so that passers-by might drop in such coins as they cared to spare. Into this box it is possible that Erasmus dropped his "consolation," of which he tells us in his description of his walk toward London with Colet, a passage oft quoted but worth quoting again. ". . . . those who journey to London, not long after leaving Canterbury, find themselves in a road at once very hollow and narrow, and moreover the banks on either side are so steep and abrupt, that there is no possibility of escape; nor can the journey be made by any other way. On the left hand of this road is a hospital of a few old men, and as soon as they perceive any horsemen approaching,

one of them runs out, sprinkles him with holy water, and presently offers the upper part of a shoe, bound with a brazen rim, and set with a piece of glass resembling a jewel. People kiss this relic, and give some small coin in acknowledgment. . . . As Cratian[1] rode on my left hand, next to the hospital, he had his sprinkling of water; this he put up with; but, when the shoe was held out, he asked the man what he wanted. He said, that it was the shoe of St Thomas. On that my friend was irritated, and turning to me he said, 'What, do these brutes imagine that we must kiss every good man's shoe? Why, by the same rule, they might offer his spittle to be kissed, or what else.' For my part I pitied the old man, and gave him a small piece of money by way of consolation. . . . From such matters as cannot be at once corrected I am accustomed to gather whatever good can be found in them."[2]

The foundation consists of a Master, nine Brethren (one of whom is Prior and another sub-Prior), seven Sisters, and various Pensioners.

We turn back as we go out of the picturesque gate and across the road to the high footpath,

[1] Colet.

[2] Erasmus, *Peregrinatio Religionis ergo*; trans. J. G. Nicholls.

and see that still the banks on either side are steep and abrupt. We pass the parish church of St Mildred, and then, descending the hill, there bursts upon us another grand view of Canterbury, the Cathedral domineering over the city. "There are two vast towers that seem to salute the visitor from afar, and make the surrounding country far and wide resound with the wonderful booming of their brazen bells," so says Erasmus. The towers have changed since his day, but to his eyesight as to ours the view must have been wonderfully impressive; the more so in that as he stood there in this roadway, he could realise as we never can what the sight of those towers meant to the pilgrims who passed him by. He had been to that shrine, and his broad mind, while contemplating some folly which he could not praise, understood that beneath all this to which his companion so strongly objected there lay much of good, and that a ruthless destruction of the tares might prove disastrous also to the wheat.

We soon pass by the opening—or rather the close—of the Pilgrims' Way, and stopping at the sexton's house in London Road, obtain his guidance to the church of St Dunstan, where there is much to see of interest. Immediately inside the western

porch, a door admits us to the ancient lepers' chapel, now used as a vestry, where those outcast folk could join in the worship of the congregation by using the squint, now blocked up with a cupboard. Here is an ancient chest, once on a time used for the collection of Peter's Pence; and the table, a fine piece of cabinet work, is the old sounding-board. At the east end of the church is the Roper Chapel, in the vault beneath lying buried Margaret Roper and the head of Sir Thomas More, her father. To this chapel pilgrims still come, and another form of reverence has been paid to the "martyr" by the offers more than once made to purchase this unpleasant relic. When the vault was opened in 1879, during the restoration of the church, the head was found to be in a state of perfect preservation.

On the opposite side of the roadway, a short distance farther on toward the city, built into a brewery, is the red brick gateway of Roper House —or Rooper, as it is spelled on the monument in the church—where Margaret preserved the sad relic, which had first been exhibited on London Bridge.

And so back again to Canterbury.

ENVOI

Back again to Canterbury, where it is to be hoped our leisure will permit us to loiter, or which our good fortune may allow us to visit again and yet again.

Canterbury sits between History and Romance, the chief city of one of the most delightful and most interesting of English counties. Her streets are thronged with memories, crowded with historic figures. Romance and History mingle inextricably —Chaucer, Marlowe, Dickens; Augustine, Becket, Cranmer. In these pages an endeavour has been made to depict Canterbury and some of the surrounding country not with the pen of the historian or of the archæologist, but to set forth rather the personal impressions of a lover of old times, old ways and old books. Christ Church Cathedral is to him no mere record in cold stone of a dead past, but a living memorial of a living past. It

is meant to be a book for those who share with the writer his delight in calling up to the mind's eye ghosts of men and women dead and gone.

At first, as has been said, Canterbury strikes disappointingly on those who go thither thinking to step back straightway from the present into the past. But gradually and surely the past overpowers the present as we linger in its narrow streets and loiter in its ancient buildings. It is no city of the dead. The life of to-day throbs in its veins; but its to-day is dull, dim and uneventful compared with its stirring, many-coloured past.

These pages have touched upon many matters concerning which many volumes have been, and will be, written; but no attempt has been made at completeness. This book is not a guide, but rather aims at being a sign-post—pointing to the past. For many years yet pilgrims will come to Canterbury, and if this little work helps any of them to see and to hear there what has been so vivid and so clear to the writer of it, the object with which it is set forth will have been gained.

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